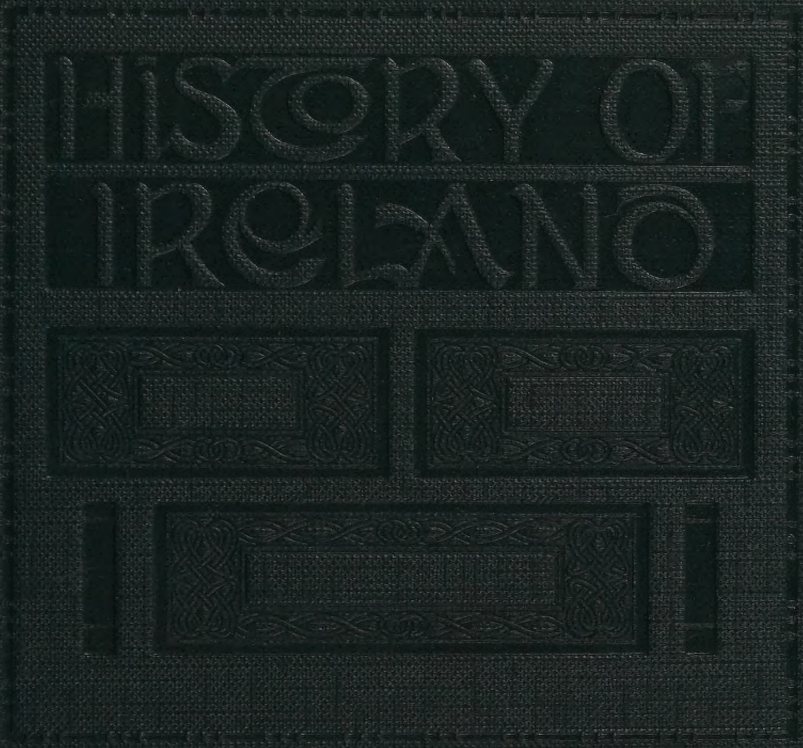
HISTORY OF
IRELAND

MONROE H. HANDLIN
122-15TH AVENUE
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History of Ireland

HALF-VOLUME VIII

MICHAEL COLLINS

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HISTORY OF IRELAND

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT DAY

BY

THE RIGHT REV.

MONSIGNOR D'ALTON

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CHAPTER XIII

The Convention

In enumerating the causes to which was due the failure of the Irish Party and its final ruin, not the least potent for evil was the apathy of the Irish themselves. Petulant and peevish fault-finding would have been neither edifying nor useful. But criticism which aimed at pointing out genuine defects and suggesting genuine remedies, would have been salutary and might have saved the country from many ills. When Mr. Dillon sought to destroy the Land Purchase Act of 1903 because it was a Tory measure, he should have been told that Ireland wanted freedom and was ready to take it from Liberal or Tory: and if Mr. Dillon had encountered the people's criticism, and if necessary their condemnation, he would soon have learned to consult the people, and have laid aside the conviction that Irish members of Parliament were the people's masters and not their servants. Mr. Redmond's limitations were well known. His capacity for legislative work was mediocre, his entire reliance on Liberal politicians a fatal mistake, and yet he was lauded as a great orator and statesman, worthy to rank with Parnell and O'Connell. Mr. Devlin was allowed to turn a benevolent society into a political machine, by which he manipulated elections and filled representative positions with unrepresentative and incompetent men. The rank and file of the Irish Party were ignorant and venal, yet they were borne with for years, and were seldom opposed at their elections.

Mr. Lloyd George's budgets and his Insurance Act were disliked in Ireland, and yet they were accepted because the Irish Party accepted them. The most cursory examination of the Home

Rule Bill revealed the worthlessness of its provisions, and yet Mr. Redmond was cheered when he declared it a great charter of liberty. And when he insisted on leaving to the Irish Party alone to determine what was to be its final shape the impudent claim was allowed. The voice of criticism became louder, and real opposition was revealed when he was ready in 1914 to acquiesce in the dismemberment of his country. But Mr. Redmond, long accustomed to have his way, ignored this opposition, and though Ireland would not get Home Rule from England he was ready to send Irishmen to die for England on foreign fields.

The rebellion of 1916 showed that the more earnest of the younger men had already lost faith in Parliamentary action. But the majority of the people were still unwilling to cast aside the Irish Party. There was discontent and disgust and a conviction that great opportunities had been missed, that there was failure where there should have been success. But, even yet the Irish leaders could have recovered some of the lost ground. They could have manfully repudiated partition; they could have exposed the sham cry about the coercion of Ulster; they could have taken up the rôle of a regular opposition; and in exposing the waste and extravagance of the Coalition Government, the mishap of the Dardanelles and the horrors of Mesopotamia, they would have earned respect in Ireland and deserved the thanks of the British Empire. Instead of this the rebels of Easter Week were assailed, innocent men detained in English prisons, the war was still called Ireland's war, and Mr. Redmond refused to sign a petition for the reprieve of Sir Roger Casement, and partition was not only agreed to by the leaders, but was sought to be forced on a reluctant Ireland.

The Nationalist leaders tried to soothe their countrymen by pretending that partition would be but temporary. But the pretence was shattered in 1916 by the speeches of Asquith and Carson and Lloyd George. And Mr. Asquith's talk about the Irish question being referred to an Imperial Conference after the war foreshadowed discussion but not decision.[1] For Parlia-

[1] Speech at Ladybank, June 14, 1916.

ment had the last word, and Mr. Redmond knew this well. Nor could he be surprised at the judgment of the Archbishop of Dublin that for years past he never had a moment's doubt that the Irish Home Rule cause in Parliament was being led along a line that could only bring it to disaster.[1] Mr. Dillon, a little later, made the extraordinary statement that the policy of excluding the six counties was dead, and he rejoiced,[2] though he had passionately recommended exclusion at the Belfast Convention; and Mr. Redmond consoled his constituents by assuring them that partition would never be revived.[3]

When Mr. Dillon's old friend Mr. Lloyd George became Prime Minister, and in his first speech declared that the appeasement of Ireland was a war measure of the first importance [4], and then immediately released all those Irishmen interned in England, Irish hopes ran high. But nothing was done, and in March the whole Irish Party walked in protest out of the House of Commons.[5] Yet Mr. Lloyd George was not happy. England was then hard pressed and it was of the first importance to get the aid of America. President Wilson had been re-elected in November because he had so far kept America out of the war, and was likely so to continue. But his bias towards England was pronounced, and he was no sooner reinstalled in office in March than he exerted all his powers to bring America into the war on the side of the Allies. His path would be smoothed if he could count on Irish support in America, and he could not while Ireland was denied her freedom. Nor could anything show better how discontented Ireland was than the election of Count Plunkett in North Roscommon in February, followed in May by the triumph of the Sinn Feiner in Longford. By that time America had joined the Allies, President Wilson professing, like England, that he was fighting for small nations. The Germans, however, retorted that England would not give freedom to the small nation at her door. The British Colonies, like America, were disgusted at England's attitude, and

[1] Public Letter of Dr. Walsh, July 25, 1916.
[2] Speech at Limerick, Oct. 5, 1916.
[3] Speech at Waterford, Oct. 6, 1916.
[4] *Hansard*, Dec. 19, 1916.
[5] *Hansard*, March 7, 1917.

the rapid growth of Sinn Fein showed that Parliamentary action was discredited, and that at the next election the Irish Party would disappear, and Ireland would demand not Home Rule, but independence.

At this stage Mr. Lloyd George determined to make a fresh effort to give Ireland contentment. From Downing Street he wrote to Mr. Redmond declaring that it was the desire of the Government to put an end to a state of affairs " which is productive of immense evil, not only to Ireland, but to Great Britain and the Empire ". In the middle of a great war the Government could not revive violent political controversy, and could only hope for a settlement which would be accepted by both sides in Ireland. Controversial questions might remain for final adjustment until after the war. Meanwhile the Government were prepared at once to put the Home Rule Act in force for twenty-six counties, leaving the six excluded counties as they were. At the end of five years the question of their inclusion would be again considered.

As a feeble beginning pointing to Irish unity the Government would set up an Irish Council consisting of all members of Parliament of the excluded area and an equal number appointed by the Irish Parliament. This Council would have power over private Bill legislation even for the excluded area, but only when a majority of the six counties wished it. Similarly a majority of the six counties might have extended to them Acts passed in Dublin. The Government considered that the financial clauses of the Act of 1914 were unsound and unworkable, and were willing to have them amended. They would also set up a Conference presided over by the Speaker with the object of improving other clauses of the Act of 1914.

If the Irish Party agreed to these proposals, and the Premier expected they would not, he proposed, as an alternative, to appoint a convention of all Irish parties, as had been done in South Africa, and he could not see why similar happy results might not be achieved. " Would it be too much," he said, " that Irishmen of all creeds and parties might meet together in convention for

the purpose of drafting a constitution for their country, which should secure a just balance of all the opposing interests, and finally compose the unhappy discords which have so long distracted Ireland and impeded its harmonious development?"

This was plausible, and if the Government had been sincerely anxious for a settlement, a settlement would emerge from the Convention. But there was no evidence of a change of mind on the part of Carson and Bonar Law, and these were prominent and powerful members of the Government. On the Irish question Mr. Lloyd George himself was thoroughly unsound. So far he had hindered rather than helped. It was plain that his sympathies were with the Orangemen rather than with the Nationalists, and he had acquired such a reputation for double dealing and insincerity that the Irish Nationalists would require to watch him closely else they would be betrayed. If, for instance, the Convention were not representative of all parties in Ireland, its decisions could be flouted: and if its decisions were not carried out by Parliament all its work would be in vain. Mr. Redmond, however, was, as usual, unsuspecting, careless of procuring assurances in advance. His party had become an unseaworthy craft, and he eagerly grasped at the Convention in the hope that it might save him from destruction.

The necessity for caution soon appeared. The Premier provided for a Convention of 101 persons. Of these 15 would be nominated by the Government, and the remaining 86 to be distributed as follows: The Chairmen of the County Councils made up 33; the Lord Mayor and Mayor of the county boroughs six; two representatives of Urban Councils from each province; five members of the Irish Party; five from the Ulster Unionist Council; five from the Southern Unionists; five from the Trades Councils: the Presidents of the Dublin, Cork, and Belfast Chambers of Commerce; four Catholic Bishops; three representatives of the Protestant Churches; two representative Irish peers; two members of Mr. O'Brien's party; and five representatives of Sinn Fein. No fault could be found with the representation given to the boroughs and urban councils, nor to the Ulster

Unionist Council or to the Southern Unionists, nor did the Chambers of Commerce, nor the Trades Councils or the Irish peers, or the churches get more than their due.

Mr. O'Brien and his party, however, would have nothing to do with the Convention. The County Council Chairmen were followers of Sir Edward Carson or Mr. Redmond, and in Nationalist counties would have no chance of being re-elected, had an election taken place. The same was probably true of the Members of Parliament, especially after the Sinn Fein victories of North Roscommon and Longford. Mr. O'Brien pointed out that ninety of the one hundred members of the Convention would be followers of Carson or Redmond, and as such pledged to partition.[1] Irish Nationalist leaders, it is true, repudiated partition: but they were not believed, and at the election for Longford Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, stated publicly that Ireland was already sold. His information was from a reliable source, and his public statement on the eve of the polling undoubtedly turned the scale in favour of Sinn Fein. The Nationalist Trades Councils of Dublin and Cork took the same view as Mr. O'Brien, and remained outside the Convention.

Some surprise was felt that the Catholic Bishops did not also hold aloof. They had recently declared publicly against dismemberment, knowing that " to Irishmen of every creed and class and party the very thought of our country, partitioned and torn as a new Poland, must be one of heartrending sorrow ". And they had been joined in this strong declaration by the Protestant Bishops of Tuam, Ossory, and Killaloe.[2] But their position was one of difficulty. Desirous of peace they hoped to exercise a moderating influence at the Convention, and at the same time to safeguard national unity, which was so seriously imperilled. They hoped too that when the Prime Minister said he wanted peace, he meant what he said. And yet it would have been better had they remained away, for then the Convention could not have been held; and if the Government did not in some other way

[1] Letter to Sir Horace Plunkett, June 25, 1917.
[2] Bishops' Manifesto, May 7, 1917.

give Ireland what she wanted, at least Ireland would not have been fooled.

The attitude of the Sinn Feiners was perfectly clear. They were quite ready to enter the Convention if the terms of reference left it free to decree the complete independence of Ireland, if it consisted of none but persons fairly elected by adult suffrage, if there were a public pledge from the Government, to America and to Europe, that the decision of the majority would be ratified, and if, meanwhile, the Irish prisoners in England since 1916 were given the treatment of prisoners of war.[1] These conditions were not unreasonable. A nominated Convention could not represent all classes and creeds in Ireland. Its deliberations would be useless if a majority vote did not bind; and its decisions would be worthless if the Government did not give in advance a binding pledge to have them carried out. Nor could the Government be said to admit the principle of self-determination if the Convention were debarred from discussing national independence.

The fact was that the Sinn Feiners distrusted the Coalition, and, above all, distrusted Mr. Lloyd George. They feared the Greeks even when they carried gifts in their hands. Ignoring the British Parliament and asserting Ireland's distinctive nationality, they wanted to have Ireland's case considered by the Peace Conference, which would meet at the end of the war, and they knew that acceptance of the Convention proposals would be fatal to their plans. They would then admit that Ireland was a province, and the Irish question a domestic one for the British Empire. The majority of those in the Convention were pledged to partition, and if agreement was reached it would be on a partition basis. If no agreement was reached England could say that the Irish question had been left to the Irish themselves, and that they could not agree. Finally, as if to justify the Sinn Feiners, the Orangemen in the Convention got a public pledge from the Government that they could not be coerced, that no decision of the Convention, no matter what the majority in its favour, could be effective to which they were unalterably opposed.[2]

[1] Resolutions of the Sinn Fein Executive. [2] *Hansard*, Mr. Bonar Law's Speech.

Mr. Lloyd George was disappointed but not dismayed. Like the good man he was, struggling against adversity, he was determined to confer benefits even on a reluctant and ungrateful Ireland. The Convention must succeed in bringing peace, and in order to create a favourable atmosphere for its deliberations he unconditionally released all those who had been sentenced to penal servitude for their share in the rebellion of the previous year, and were then serving their time in English prisons.

Mr. Lloyd George thought he deserved well of Ireland, and just then an opportunity was given to test the trend of Irish public opinion. Major William Redmond had fallen in action in France, and in consequence his seat in East Clare became vacant. Two candidates entered the field, Mr. Patrick Lynch, K.C., and Mr. Eamon De Valera. The former was an eminent lawyer, a Catholic and a Clare man, whose personal character was unimpeachable. But he had been a Crown Prosecutor, and was believed to be an expectant judge, and the Irish Party had surely fallen low when a Crown lawyer went to Clare as its standard-bearer. His opponent, Mr. De Valera, was a young man not much beyond thirty, with a brilliant academic record, and who in the rebellion of 1916 had shown marked ability for military command. Sentenced to death, he was reprieved because, though brought up in Ireland, he was born in New York, and the English thought it imprudent to execute an American citizen. He was unconditionally released from prison just in time to be nominated for Clare, where he fought a splendid battle and was triumphantly returned.

The figures were: De Valera 5010, Lynch 2035, a victory so great for Sinn Fein, a defeat so crushing for the Irish Party, that it astonished both friend and foe. The Irish leaders were struck dumb. Mr. De Valera had conducted his election like a gentleman, and had made a most favourable impression for his manliness and courage. But it was not a question of persons but of principles; and the *Cork Constitution* was quite right in saying that had Mr. Dillon or Mr. Devlin been a candidate instead of Mr. Lynch it would not have altered the result by

a score of votes. Both English and Irish journals were frankly astonished. The *Star* believed it would seriously perturb the Irish Party and the Government. The *Daily Mail* regarded it as a notice to quit to the Irish Party. All agreed that the Irish Party had lost the confidence of the country, and that a Convention from which the Sinn Feiners and Mr. O'Brien's party, as well as Labour were excluded, could speak with no authority. It was doubtful if the Irish Party could carry any seat, and this view was strengthened by what happened at Kilkenny a fortnight later, when there was another defeat for Mr. Redmond and another victory for Sinn Fein. For Mr. Redmond the wisest course would have been to ask for a vote of confidence from his constituency at Waterford, by resigning his seat and seeking re-election. At the same time he should insist that both the composition and the mandate of the Convention should be radically recast.

But Mr. Redmond had been too long timid to do anything bold in 1917. He would not quarrel with Mr. Lloyd George, nor embarrass the Coalition Government, and in due course the Convention began its allotted task. The first sitting was held on July 25, 1917, the last on April 5, 1918. The place of meeting was Trinity College, the chairman was Sir Horace Plunkett, the Secretary Lord Southborough, who had acted in a similar capacity at the Convention which framed a constitution for South Africa. Nor could a better selection be made for the Chair than Sir Horace Plunkett, a man of experience in public affairs and of proved patriotism, moderate, suave, conciliatory, tolerant of all opinions, and painstaking in the task of reconciling divergent views.

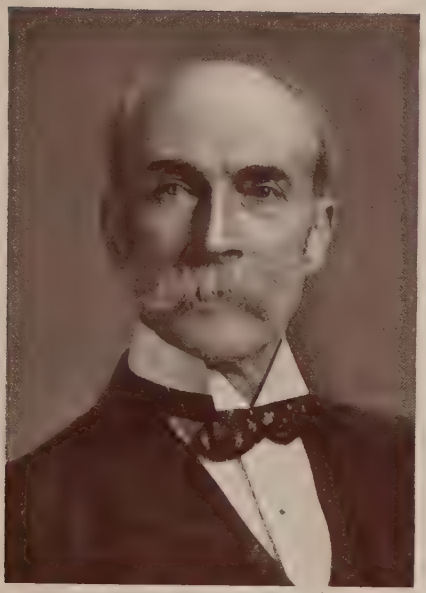
It was, however, beyond his strength to succeed. The Ulster men had got pledges from Mr. Lloyd George and from Mr. Asquith that they would not be coerced, and if they objected to any scheme proposed, it would not be accepted by the Government. The Southern Unionists were willing to accept Home Rule for an undivided Ireland, but wanted the Customs to remain in Imperial hands. The Nationalists insisted on full fiscal

autonomy, believing that such would satisfy all Nationalists. After many sessions had been held, the Convention had come to a deadlock, and the Ulster Unionists explained their position with commendable frankness. They regarded fiscal autonomy as tantamount to separation, and insisted that Ireland and Great Britain must have a common system of finance. This was fundamental, and if they did not make this clear they would leave themselves open to the reproach " of carrying on the business of the Convention under false pretences ".[1]

At that stage the Convention should have abandoned its task. But it continued its sittings, hoping for agreement where agreement was plainly impossible, discussing through committees such questions as land purchase and housing in towns, and above all, finance. In January, 1918, another deadlock was reached, and Mr. Lloyd George on being so informed was much distressed. He professed the greatest anxiety for the Convention's success, protesting that " the Government are agreed and determined that a solution must be found ". He thought it well that delegates from the different parties in the Convention should proceed to London and consult with the Cabinet. This was done early in February, and then it was made plain that, not only were there grave differences between the Ulster Orangemen and the majority of the Convention, but also between the Southern Unionists and the Nationalists. In this latter case the differences were concerned with the question of full or only partial autonomy. After hearing the delegates in London the Cabinet consulted, and Mr. Lloyd George communicated their considered suggestions to Sir Horace Plunkett.

The Premier's letter effected a sudden and dramatic change In his letter to Mr. Redmond, suggesting a convention as an alternative to partition, he invited Irishmen of all parties to draft a constitution, and there were no limits imposed, no suggestion that a scheme approved by a majority of the Convention would not get statutory approval. Later, it is true, a pledge was given to the Ulstermen that their disapproval to

[1] Letter of Mr. Barrie and Lord Londonderry, Nov. 14, 1917.



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any scheme would be fatal. Now, Mr. Lloyd George, while most anxious for a scheme by consent, was evidently prepared to deal even with a majority report. But he put in for the first time limitations and restrictions which paralysed the Convention. The Government, he said, could not assent during the war to hand over the Customs and Excise, nor the Post Office nor Police. The Irish Parliament to be set up must confine itself to the cramped field of taxation outside Customs and Excise; and it could not control either the Post Office nor have a single policeman at its command. After the war the Government would see what could be done by appointing a new Financial Relations Committee, Mr. Lloyd George conveniently forgetting that the Primrose Committee had already reported, and had recommended that Ireland should have fiscal autonomy. To console the Convention for these irritating limitations the Premier was ready to give effect to the Convention's agreed suggestions regarding land purchase and town housing: and would without delay, as part of an Irish settlement, provide for the completion of land purchase and for better housing in towns.[1]

Those in the Convention who expected anything useful from further sessions, after the receipt of this letter, were indeed of a sanguine temperament. Yet the sessions continued until the 5th of April, and then, as might have been expected, broke up in disagreement. A section of the Nationalists held out for full fiscal autonomy, but were willing to have free trade between Ireland and Great Britain. But the majority of the Nationalists, the Southern Unionists and five of the seven Labour members would be satisfied with the Excise, leaving Customs unity unimpaired. All these were agreed that there should be a contribution from Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer; that Ireland should have no control over the army or navy; and that there should be one Parliament for all Ireland. They were, however, willing to guarantee a 40 per cent representation to the Unionists in the House of Commons, hoping by this concession to remove the objections of the Ulster Unionists.

[1] Letter to Sir Horace Plunkett, Feb. 25, 1918.

The hope was vain. The Ulstermen, like the crab, had progressed backwards, and at the end of the Convention they wanted the whole nine Ulster counties excluded, though in the beginning they would have been satisfied with the exclusion of six counties. They objected to the new Nationalist proposals as far in advance of the Act of 1914, as constituting a sovereign independent Parliament, co-equal in power with the Imperial Parliament. They objected to fiscal autonomy, to the right to raise a territorial force, to the repudiation of the National Debt on the plea of long-continued overtaxation, to the denial of the right of the Imperial Parliament to impose conscription on Ireland, without the consent of the Irish Parliament. And they refused the concession of a 40 per cent representation in the Irish House of Commons on the ground that it was an undemocratic proposal.[1]

Sir Horace Plunkett would say with truth that a larger measure of agreement had been reached upon the principle and details of Irish self-government than had ever before been attained, and he naturally assumed that the proposals of the majority of the Convention would soon take legislative form.[2] He could not assume that Belfast and its neighbourhood would be given a permanent veto on legislation affecting Ireland, especially if the interests of the British Empire demanded that no such veto should be maintained. But the Ulstermen were inexorable. They had got pledges from the whole Coalition Government, and they were determined that these pledges should not be forgotten.

Nor could Mr. Lloyd George have experienced much surprise at the result of the Convention's deliberations or decisions, else he would have given no binding pledges to Unionist Ulster. To give a right of veto to any minority is a denial of democracy; it is to bring the work of Parliament to a standstill, and would make all popular government impossible. Had Mr. Lloyd George been serious he would have accepted the conditions of the Sinn Feiners; and had he been anxious to smooth the path of the

[1] Report of the Ulster Unionist members of the Convention.
[2] Letter to the Premier, April 8, 1918.

Convention he would have ceased to harass the Sinn Feiners. Instead of creating a favourable atmosphere for the Convention, it seemed as if he wished that all its efforts would be vain. Sinn Fein flags could not be carried or placed on public buildings. Sinn Fein meetings were suppressed, and magistrates who attended them were deprived of the Commission of the Peace. At Gort there was a brutal attack by a police sergeant on a respectable citizen. At Ballybunion a man was killed and two policemen were charged with his murder. There was suppression of newspapers and a strict censorship; and at Waterford when the Sinn Feiners attempted to hold a meeting and accuse Mr. Redmond before his constituents, the meeting was stopped by soldiers and police, with rifles, machine-guns, and heavy artillery.[1]

Worse than all was the death of Mr. Thomas Ashe. In the rebellion he had taken part in the affair at Ashbourne, where several policemen had lost their lives. For this he had been sentenced to penal servitude for life, and if he had been kept in prison it would have occasioned no surprise. But he had been, with others, unconditionally released, his crime entirely forgotten. A little later he was indicted for making a speech, which was of a harmless character, and on the evidence of two policemen, reproducing the speech from memory, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment. In Mountjoy Prison he went on hunger strike as a protest, was forcibly fed when at death's door, and then liberated only to die. A wave of rage and anger swept through the land. Thomas Ashe, hitherto unknown, became a national hero, receiving a national funeral through the streets of Dublin and a grave in Glasnevin. Nor was the public rage appeased when it was discovered that Ashe's chief jailer was Mr. Redmond's son-in-law, Mr. Max Green, lately appointed through Mr. Redmond's influence, Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board.

Some of the heat and passion stirred up outside by Ashe's death found its way into the Convention held in Trinity College, and it seemed as if the Convention would come to an untimely end. But passion cooled and the Convention continued to talk,

[1] *Daily Express.*

This was just what the Government wanted; and Mr. F. E. Smith, on a mission to America injudiciously disclosed the Government's purpose. Let the Convention go on talking, he said. The Ulster Unionists continued obstinate, relying on the pledges given them and producing, as Sir Horace Plunkett complained, no constructive proposals of their own. Some of the County Council representatives, receiving as members of the Convention a fee of a guinea a day, pocketed the money cheerfully and were in no hurry, flattered at being engaged on such important work as the framing of a constitution. Mr. Devlin and Mr. Redmond, especially Mr. Redmond, were hopeful to the last. But Mr. Dillon was not sanguine, and did not join the Convention, describing it as the device of a hard-pressed minister to gain time.[1]

Indeed this very accurately described Mr. Lloyd George's position. He disliked Ireland and he disliked Home Rule. But he wanted to curry favour with America, and nothing surely could be fairer than to leave the settlement of the Irish question to Irishmen themselves. Like a well-drilled army, politicians and press in Great Britain took up the refrain, and when Irish troubles were mentioned the speaker was rebuked. Silence was so far imposed that it became a crime punishable under the Defence of the Realm Act to publish anything about what was happening in the Convention. It was engaged in a solemn work and no jarring note must be struck outside to disturb the serenity of its debates. All the time an intensive propaganda was carried on in America, where Lord Northcliffe was labouring with great energy, with an army of 500 officials and 10,000 co-operators. The British taxpayer's money was poured out like water in this work of propaganda. The altruism of Great Britain was trumpeted from press and platform, in the saloon and in the railway car, in the lecture room and in the cinema. England was shown as the hater of the Huns and of Prussian militarism, the champion of small and oppressed nations, the lover of liberty in every land. She loved Ireland and was undoing the evil past, animated with nothing but benevolence. The only obstacle was those troublesome

[1] Speech in Armagh, Dec. 23, 1917.

Sinn Feiners, who were the enemies of England and of America and the friends of Germany.

In the beginning of 1918 the work was done. President Wilson had then brought America into the work, and could not turn back. As English as the English themselves, nothing could exceed his zeal on their behalf, and the man who had been re-elected on a peace ticket, now breathed nothing but war. The American constitution gives very exceptional powers to the President, and Mr. Wilson used these powers to the full. He mobilized all his country's resources, its ships, railways, food supplies, and men. When all this work was done it was thought by the Government that the Convention might end. It had served its purpose, it had gained time; it had made it easier for President Wilson to bring America and all her strength into the war. This being done, the stream of talk in the Convention ceased. The Ulster Unionists became more obstinate than ever, and raised rather than lowered their demands; and when the majority report was presented to the Government, Mr. Lloyd George, without taking the trouble to read it, proceeded to give Ireland conscription and not Home Rule.

Meantime two prominent Irishmen had passed into the land of eternal silence. In August, 1917, Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, passed away at the ripe age of seventy. A man of brilliant talents, passionately devoted to Ireland and to the Church, he belonged indeed to the Church Militant; and whenever he thought the country or Church were unjustly assailed he struck home. He never counted the odds against him, and was indifferent alike to the menaces of the powerful as he was to popular applause. He attacked the Plan of Campaign and its authors, even when its authors could assemble thousands to groan the Bishop in his own cathedral city. He attacked the Irish leaders for their subserviency to British Liberals, seeing clearly that this road was the road to disaster. He had no sympathy with the British Empire in the war, and no faith in her professed war aims; and he exposed the cowardly assaults on the helpless Irish boys at Liverpool, when the Irish representatives, bought by

British politicians, were dumb. His sympathies were with the rebels of Easter Week, and his scorn for those who sent them to the prison and to the scaffold; and before his words of scornful defiance the military dictator of Ireland fell back in dismay. Dr. O'Dwyer loathed partition and scoffed at the Convention, and he was satisfied that nothing could be done for Ireland until the Irish Party were driven from public life. In his last days he was venerated as few public men have ever been in Ireland, and when he died he was mourned by the whole Irish race.

Mr. Redmond was a very different type of man. After leaving college he got a clerkship in the House of Commons, and it would have been well for himself and for Ireland if he had continued in this position. He was an honourable man, and in the Civil Service, where a competence was secured him and the work was not too exhausting, he would have acquitted himself well. Drawn into politics he came at once under the influence of Parnell, and under his masterful leadership, and in a subordinate position he did some useful work. He was not, however, in the same rank as Mr. Sexton or Mr. Healy, who shone out as did the marshals of Napoleon round Napoleon. Mr. Redmond's qualities were showy rather than solid, the qualities of a man just above mediocrity. He had none of Mr. Parnell's gifts of leadership, and when Parnell passed away, the new leader was but a shrunken figure in the dead leader's armour. He might essay to fill the rôle of Ulysses, but he was certainly unable to bend his bow.

For the next few years Mr. Redmond's influence in Irish politics was wholly evil. He defied all constitutional principles by leading a small minority; he dissipated the national strength in face of a powerful enemy; and in 1900 the Irish people had almost lost confidence in Parliamentary action, so powerless had become their representatives in Parliament. As leader of the re-united Irish Party, after 1900, Mr. Redmond was certainly better than Mr. Dillon. He was less self-conceited, less domineering, more tolerant towards his opponents. But he fell far short of what was required, and utterly failed to utilize opportunities such as had never before been given to an Irish leader. No doubt

he was hampered by the intrigues of Mr. Dillon; but if Mr. Redmond had been strong he would have taken the people into his confidence; and the manipulating of conventions, the filling of the party with incompetents and the begging of favours from the Government would have ceased. His entire reliance on Liberal promises was his crowning mistake. He knew Irish history, and as he turned back to other alliances he saw that every step was marked by treachery and betrayal. Yet, ignoring the lessons of the past he continued to trust Asquith and trust Lloyd George, and kept them in office. His reward was fresh taxation and the Insurance Act, the Home Rule Act and the Amending Bill, the abortive convention and the conscription of Ireland's manhood.

In his last years Mr. Redmond had become so thoroughly out of touch with Irish opinion, so thoroughly Anglicized, that he looked at public events with English rather than with Irish eyes. He sent thousands of his countrymen to fight England's battles on foreign fields; and he spoke of England, the champion of small nations, as unctuously as did Mr. Lloyd George. He spoke of our navy and what great things it was doing on the sea, and of our army in France, and even resented any criticism of its commanders. In the Convention his attitude was that of an Imperial statesman rather than an Irish leader; and in the Belfast City Hall, where the Convention held some of its sittings, his speech was received in silence by his friends, but by the Belfast Orangemen with rapturous cheers. In Dublin, at the same time, this Nationalist leader was hooted and hissed. He was constantly guarded by police, and every day as he went from his hotel to the Convention meeting, detectives kept him under close observation. Unpopularity had indeed come; failure was written largely over his whole career; and Mr. Redmond, betrayed by English politicians, felt his position keenly and died of a broken heart.

His friends were perhaps consoled by the character of his funeral, though Irish Nationalists everywhere were shocked. Wolfe Tone died in the enemy's prison; Emmet's head was held up as the head of a traitor. It was Irish crowds alone that filled the streets to overflowing when O'Connell was borne to Glasnevin;

and when Parnell was laid to rest on a bleak October day no English tears were shed. But there was grief for Mr. Redmond in the British Parliament; the King and his ministers mourned him as one of their own; even Sir Edward Carson had a word of praise, and the British press wrote columns on the dead leader's loyalty. At his funeral the Commander of the Forces was present; soldiers marched with reversed arms and muffled drums; the chief law officer of the Crown delivered a panegyric. For an Irish Nationalist leader these were, surely, unusual honours.

In November, 1917, the Sinn Feiners held a convention and appointed an executive of which Mr. De Valera was appointed President, Mr. Griffith Vice-President, and the work of organizing the constituencies was pushed on with great vigour. Sunday after Sunday the Sinn Fein leaders attended meetings in every part of Ireland. And these meetings were not less enthusiastic in Ulster than in the other provinces. At these meetings the authority of the British Parliament was repudiated, the independence of Ireland asserted, the Sinn Fein doctrine of self-reliance preached, the corruption and inefficiency of the Irish Party proclaimed. The franchise was about to be greatly extended with a new Distribution Bill for Ireland, and Sinn Feiners were warned to be vigilant and register their votes, so that a general election would not find them unprepared. It was important to drive the Irish Party from public life, so that they could no longer claim to speak for the nation. A Peace Conference must necessarily be held at the end of the war, and unless English statesmen lied, and President Wilson was a hypocrite, Ireland's case would be considered by the Peace Conference. She was a small nation, and an oppressed one, and as such entitled to her freedom.

At the opening of 1918 Sinn Fein was already a powerful organization, and if a general election were then held, very few of Mr. Redmond's followers would be returned. Yet the old party, with the old register was still able in some constituencies to hold its own. The Sinn Fein successes at Longford, Clare and Kilkenny were not followed up in the new year. At Armagh the Redmondite was returned, but only, it is true, by the help of

the Unionist vote. At Waterford the name of Redmond was one to conjure with, and when the leader died, his seat was won by his son Captain Redmond. And the seat vacated by Captain Redmond at Tyrone was also won by an Irish Party man. But though these successes kept the Convention alive, they did not ensure its success. Nor did they indicate that the Irish Party could recover lost ground; for when King's County became vacant it was won by the Sinn Feiner without a contest; and Cavan, after a hard fight, was won by Mr. Arthur Griffith.

Mr. Dillon was then leader, having been elected in March to the place vacated by Mr. Redmond. Mr. Devlin would have been a better selection. He was a more eloquent speaker, a more capable Parliamentarian. But Mr. Dillon wanted the position, and would not be denied, and all who remembered his former record as leader knew well that he would hasten rather than avert the ruin of the Irish Party. He had already committed every mistake that it was possible for a politician to make. He had abused Butt and thwarted Parnell, driven Mr. Healy out of the party, and lost the support of Mr. William O'Brien. He would take nothing from the Tories and could get nothing from the Liberals; and if Mr. Redmond was an English Whig, Mr. Dillon was an English Radical, who hated the Tories and was jealous of the influence of the Catholic Church. He trusted Lord Rosebery when he was betraying Home Rule; he trusted Asquith who was more plausible but equally treacherous; he continued to trust Lloyd George who was the most treacherous of all. Experience had brought him no wisdom, and when in his old age he stepped into Mr. Redmond's place, his message to the Irish people was that there was to be no Home Rule, but that the conscription of their manhood was at hand.

CHAPTER XIV

Conscription and Coercion

Had Mr. Gladstone lived during the Great War the recent history of Ireland would be very different from what it has been. His high moral purpose in everything profoundly convinced the Irish of his sincerity, and for the first time they saw an English statesman whose word they could trust. Lesser men succeeded to the Liberal inheritance, men inferior in sincerity and honour; but in memory of Gladstone the Irish continued to trust his successors; nor was it until they saw Mr. Asquith and Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Carson in the same Cabinet that disillusionment came. It was felt that the old evil days of the political trickster and of shameful betrayal had returned. The executions after Easter Week, the imprisonments and raids and the suppression of newspapers, the Convention which was meant only to keep the Irish talking, and to throw dust in American eyes, the ignoring of the Convention report, and the passing of conscription recalled the worst days of Liberal treachery, and in 1918 all trace of Irishmen's trust in British politicians had disappeared.

One of the most tragic elements in the relations between England and Ireland has always been that the Englishman has never troubled to put himself in the Irishman's place, nor been able to understand the Irishman's point of view. It was right that the Irishman should join the army in 1914, but not right that he should press for Home Rule. Nor could the Englishman see any injustice in having the Irish Catholic soldier who had distinguished himself passed over, while the Orange soldier was praised and promoted. And when Irishmen, refused liberty at

home, or recognition for his valour in battle, refused any longer to join the army they were denounced as slackers and disloyal. In every country constitutionally governed the majority rules: but in Ireland it is the minority, and the Englishman cannot understand why the majority should complain. Nor did he see anything wrong in Mr. Lloyd George making promises to the Irish leaders which he had no intention to keep, nor in compelling Irishmen to fight for the Empire which denied them their freedom.

It was here that the Irish, driven to bay, took a firm stand, and closed up their ranks in the presence of a common danger. Cardinal Logue warned the Government that, if conscription were enforced, disorder and chaos would ensue. The Archbishop of Dublin declared that no Home Rule Bill would pacify the country if conscription were enforced. And the Irish Bishops protested that neither the English Government nor any government had a moral right to conscript Ireland against her will. In spite of these warnings the Government went on, and in April, 1918, the Conscription Act was passed. To make matters worse, the Prime Minister would give only vague promises about a Home Rule Bill being passed; and he declared that, with or without Home Rule, conscription would be enforced. When conscription had been passed against the will of the Irish Nation, and in defiance of the protests of its leaders, the Bishops, at a special meeting at Maynooth, declared that conscription, forced in this way upon Ireland, was " an oppressive and inhuman law, which the Irish people had a right to resist by all the means that are consonant with the law of God ".[1]

Protesting in vain in the House of Commons, the Irish Party returned to Ireland, and Mr. O'Neill, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, suggested that all parties should meet in conference. This was done, and while the Bishops were holding their meeting at Maynooth, the political and labour leaders were assembled at the Mansion House, Dublin. To take counsel with the Bishops they sent a deputation to Maynooth consisting of Messrs. Dillon and Devlin from the Irish Party, Messrs. O'Brien and Healy from

[1] Bishops' Resolutions, April 18, 1918.

the Independent Party, Messrs. De Valera and Griffith from Sinn Fein, Mr. O'Brien from Labour, and the Lord Mayor. As a result of the joint deliberations the Bishops directed that, on the following Sunday, a public Mass should be celebrated to avert the scourge of conscription; that a collection should also be made in each parish to supply money for the impending struggle; and that on the same day a public meeting should be held and the following pledge administered to the people:

"Denying the right of the British Government to enforce compulsory service in this country, we pledge ourselves solemnly to one another to resist conscription by the most effective means at our disposal."[1]

Subsequently, to concert measures of defence, the Mansion House Conference sat from day to day, and in due time drew up a statement of the reasons for the stand that Ireland had taken. In America the Irish were being painted as slackers and rebels, whom nothing could please, and who were unwilling to fight by America's side. Nor could it be denied that this British propaganda had met with some success, and that the Irish fight against conscription prejudiced Ireland in the eyes of millions of Americans who had hitherto been friends. It was for this reason that the Mansion House Statement took the form of an address to the President of America, and was ordered to be presented to him in person by the Lord Mayor of Dublin.

It was an able document and put Ireland's case well. Recalling the fact that America in her war of Independence had appealed to Ireland, and not in vain, now Ireland in her hour of need appealed to America. President Wilson was informed that the conscription law for Ireland was passed against the protests of the Irish representatives, and it was passed by a Parliament already in the eighth year of its existence. Ireland had long been overtaxed by England. Now she was called upon to pay a blood-tax, and to a country which had so misgoverned her that in less than a century Ireland's population had been reduced by one half.

[1] Bishops' Resolutions, April 18, 1918.

Irishmen were now asked to make the world safe for democracy, but it was to be in every country but their own. For, though a Home Rule Act was on the Statute Book, it would not be enforced, in obedience to the unreasoning bigotry of North-east Ulster. "Nevertheless," says the address, "in the face of persistent discouragements Irish chivalry remained ardent and aflame in the first year of the war. Tens of thousands of the children of the Gael have perished in the conflict. Their bones bleach upon the soil of Flanders, or moulder beneath the waves of Suvla Bay. The slopes of Gallipoli, the sands of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Judea afford them sepulture. Mons and Ypres provide them monuments. Wherever the battle line extends, from the English Channel to the Persian Gulf, their ghostly voices utter a response to the roll-call of the guardian spirits of liberty. What is the reward?

"The spot on earth they loved best, the land to which they owed their first duty and which they hoped their sacrifices might help to freedom, lies unredressed under an age-long thraldom. So, too, would it forever lie were every man and every youth within the shores of Ireland to immolate himself in England's service, unless the clamour of a dominant caste be rebuked and stilled. . . .

"Capitulations are observed with French Canadians, with the Maltese, with the Hindoos, with the Mahommedan Arabs or the African Boers; but never has the word of England, in any capital case, been kept towards the 'Sister' island.

"In every generation the Irish nation is challenged to plead to a new indictment, and to the present summons answer is made before no narrow forum, but to the tribunal of the world. So answering, we commit our case, as did America, to 'the virtuous and humane', and also, more humbly, to the providence of God."

The arrangement at the Mansion House was that this address should be presented at Washington by the Lord Mayor of Dublin. But the Lord Mayor could not travel to America without a passport, and he would get no passport from the British Foreign Office without submitting the address to the Lord-Lieutenant of

Ireland. This he refused to do, being advised that such censorship was not warranted by any legal regulation.[1] As the only alternative left he proceeded to London and handed the address to the American Ambassador for transmission to President Wilson at Washington. After having been received by him, it was published in the American newspapers and by the newspapers throughout the world.

Already British propaganda in America had been so active, and so lavishly subsidized, that public opinion was seriously affected against Ireland, and great journals like the New York *Times* were more anti-Irish than many English newspapers. This poisoning of the wells was to be continued, and hence the reluctance of the Coalition Government to allow the Lord Mayor of Dublin to go to Washington. But something more was required. Conscription could not indeed be enforced, as a united Ireland had determined to resist it, even with their lives; and the extermination of a whole people would have shocked the world. There would, however, be no Home Rule, and there would be coercion; and in pursuance of this changed policy Lord Wimborne and Mr. Duke were removed from office and Lord French and Mr. Shortt took their places. At the same time, Mr. Campbell, Carson's great friend, became Lord Chief Justice.

Lord French's idea of Irish government was that of a drill sergeant, and Mr. Shortt, a renegade Home Ruler, was quite willing to be his obedient instrument. The first act of the new government was to proclaim the Sinn Fein organization, the Gaelic League, the Volunteers, and every association of men or women to which popular allegiance was given. It was announced that in due time conscription would be enforced, but meantime such enforcement would not take place if the Irish, by voluntary recruiting, furnished 50,000 men to the army. But as if to destroy all chance of getting men by voluntary recruiting, all the Sinn Fein leaders, nearly a hundred in number, were arrested and thrown into prison. This was a serious shock to American public opinion. It was no secret that President Wilson wanted the

[1] Letter of the Lord Mayor to the American Ambassador at London.

Irish question settled to the satisfaction of the majority of the Irish people. " The whole world knows, and especially America knows, that the majority of the Irish people have been obliged to live under a system of government not desired by the majority, and acceptable only to the minority of the inhabitants."[1]

To change the current of American opinion about Ireland, to justify the arrest of the Sinn Fein leaders and the postponement of Home Rule, and at the same time to sow division among the members of the Mansion House Conference was not easy. But Mr. Lloyd George's ingenuity was not unequal to the task. Early in May Sir Edward Carson issued a statement that the Government had the clearest evidence in their possession, showing that the Sinn Fein organization " is and has been in alliance with Germany ". There was a German plot, and an agent of Germany had landed in Clare from a collapsible boat, bearing important documents to the Sinn Fein leaders. He was an Irishman, a soldier named Dowling, and was at once taken to the Tower of London; and press and politicians spoke and wrote of him with something like awe as the Man in the Tower. Mr. Lloyd George, always ready to co-operate with Carson, added his contribution by saying: " I have seen the evidence and after perusing it there can be no doubt left on any reasonable mind as to the duty of the Government. Much of the evidence could not be published without endangering the public safety, because it gives away the sources of our information, and no taunts will drive us to the publication of that part of the evidence." [2]

If the Sinn Fein leaders were in alliance with Germany they were traitors, and those who elected them to Parliament were not worthy of Home Rule. The press was satisfied that the German plot was a reality. " The best elements in Irish Nationalism recognize that Ireland's friends in all countries accept the Government's assurances about the plot, and that American and all allied opinion is now marshalled solidly against sedition and the defenders of sedition in this country."[3] Thus was the Coalition

[1] *Times*, Washington correspondent. [2] Speech at Edinburgh, May 25, 1918.
[3] *The Times*, Irish correspondent, May 27, 1918.

Government justified in American eyes. Nor could Mr. Dillon and Mr. Devlin, both so loyal, be expected to consort with the Sinn Feiners. Indeed Mr. Lloyd George exonerated them. " The Irish Nationalist leaders had nothing to do with it; they were not even cognizant of it." This testimonial of good character had the desired effect. Everyone in Ireland knew that the plot was a pure fabrication on the part of the Government; and the Irish Nationalist leaders who in such circumstances received the praises of the Premier stood condemned in the eyes of their own countrymen.

That the whole story was mythical soon appeared. Lord Wimborne was Viceroy in April when Dowling landed from his collapsible boat. Yet as far as he knew, neither he nor any member of the Irish Executive " had been aware of the existence of the plot, until it was discovered by the British Government. This he thought strange in view of the highly specialized means of obtaining information which recently existed in Ireland."[1]

The Government promised to put the Sinn Fein leaders on their trial, and the documents found on Dowling would then be produced. But time passed and there was no trial, and when Dowling was tried, the world was astonished to find that the man never had any documents. Nothing was found on him but Rosary beads and £35 in money. This so angered Mr. T. M. Healy that he wanted to know from the Government which of the officials in Dublin Castle concocted the whole story; and he wanted a select committee " to examine the documents which the Government declare justified the internment of Irish prisoners." [2] There was, of course, no select committee, because there were no documents to examine; and Mr. Shortt had to declare that these Irish prisoners were interned on suspicion.[3]

While they were deprived of their liberty Mr. Dillon and his followers were free to organize and make speeches, and undoubtedly the arrest of Mr. Griffith during the election at Cavan gave Mr. Dillon a great advantage. But two priests, Father

[1] Speech in the House of Lords, June 20, 1918.
[2] *Hansard*, Aug. 8, 1918. [3] Col. Repington.

Russell

VISCOUNT WIMBORNE

Lafayette

COUNTESS MARKIEVICZ

Lafayette

GENERAL SIR JOHN MAXWELL

Lafayette

THE O'RAHILLY

O'Flanagan from Elphin and Dr. Browne of Maynooth, carried on the fight for Mr. Griffith, and secured his triumphant return. A new franchise law had recently been passed, giving votes to women and greatly extending the franchise among men. There was also a new Redistribution Act which increased the number of Irish seats by giving a member to the Queen's University, Belfast, and another to the National University, and so re-arranged the county and borough seats, that all boroughs disappeared except Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Derry, and Waterford.

Parliament had then outlived its statutory term of five years, and a general election was to be held at the close of the year. The internment of their leaders seriously hampered the Sinn Feiners. But there were still free many willing and earnest volunteers, a good many of them among the younger priests, and much was done in registration and propaganda. Nor were the Sinn Feiners, in spite of all the obstacles thrown in their way, so ill prepared when the election came.

Mr. Dillon was free to marshall his forces and say what he pleased. And he did not spare his opponents, and never was more reckless, more vicious or more truculent. During the Cavan election he sneered at Mr. Griffith because he had not gone into open rebellion in 1916. He wanted to know how the Sinn Fein M.P. for King's County, Dr. MacCarten, got to America, knowing well that he had to go by stealth, as he would certainly have got no passport from the British Government, and would, instead, have been thrown into prison with his colleagues, Messrs. Griffith and De Valera. Mr. Dillon sneered at Father O'Flanagan and at Dr. Browne, the young Maynooth Professor, because they supported Sinn Fein. He denounced the policy of permanent abstention from the British Parliament as leaving the field free to Carson. And while he and his party were protesting that they stood where Parnell and Davitt stood, they were begging for offices for their friends. Publicly they were attacking Lord French and Mr. Shortt, but privately they wanted their friend Mr. O'Sullivan to be appointed Clerk of the Crown for Limerick,

and were entreating Lord French and Mr. Shortt for the post.[1]

During the General Election Mr. Dillon was specially bitter. If there was coercion in Ireland it was, he said, the fault of the Sinn Feiners, because they made impossible demands. He still pinned his faith to the British Parliament, satisfied that if he had but forty members to lead he would obtain justice for Ireland. He was sure that Mr. Lloyd George would be returned to office, but with forty members he would bring down his government within two years. He blossomed forth into a loyalist, and spoke with enthusiasm of the good old British Empire. Nor did he hesitate to accept a lying newspaper story, that the Sinn Feiners in Galway, angry with America for being the ally of England, had publicly burned the American flag. The effect of his statement would necessarily be to poison the mind of America against Ireland, and even if the flag incident were true, it should not have been used by Mr. Dillon. But the whole story was a concoction, the flag was never burned, and Mr. Dillon circulated a false story to blacken his own country before the world.

The Sinn Feiners on their side put their programme before the people, and were able to answer Mr. Dillon. When Mr. Dillon entered Parliament in 1880, the population of Ireland was 5,202,648; in 1917 it was 4,337,000; while taxation in the same period had gone up from £6,036,213 to £23,766,500. In 1880 the taxation of Ireland per head was £1, 3*s*.; in 1917 it was £5, 18*s*.; and comparing Ireland with other countries it was the most heavily taxed country in the world. From the British Parliament nothing could be got for Ireland but taxation and coercion. The Irish members, always a minority, were always outvoted, and this even when the Irish Party was honest and independent. But what could an Irish Party do that was neither honest nor independent; one day denouncing Lord French and the next day secretly begging of him for office. Mr. Dillon's policy was barren and futile, and when he claimed to stand where

[1] *Nationality*, Oct. 12, 1918. The letters and telegrams fell into the hands of the Sinn Feiners and were published. They were not denied.

Parnell and Davitt stood he was nothing better than an impostor.

The Sinn Feiners asked the people's support to make Ireland an independent republic, disdaining to remain any longer a province of the British Empire. They denied the right of the British Parliament to legislate for Ireland, and therefore withdrew from that Parliament. After the election they would call a constituent assembly, supreme in national affairs, and empowered to speak and act for the whole people; and they would appeal to the Peace Conference for recognition, confident that the assembled nations would grant Ireland her independence. "The enforced exodus of millions of our people, the decay of our industrial life, the ever-increasing financial plunder of our country, the whittling of the demand for Repeal of the Union voiced by the first Irish Leader to plead in the hall of the Conqueror to that of Home Rule on the Statute Book, and finally the contemplated mutilation of our country by partition, are some of the ghastly results of a policy that leads to national ruin. The present Irish members of the British Parliament constitute an obstacle to be removed from the path that leads to the Peace Conference. By declaring their will to accept the status of a province instead of boldly taking their stand upon the right of the nation, they supply England with the only subterfuge at her disposal for obscuring the issue in the eyes of the world."[1]

The Manifesto added that Sinn Fein went to the polls handicapped by all the arts and contrivances that a powerful and unscrupulous enemy could employ against it. Its leaders were thrown into prison, in many cases without trial; its organization was broken up, in so far as it acted publicly; its meetings were banned; and those who would actively support its propaganda were sought to be intimidated by prosecutions, usually followed by savage sentences, and shameful ill-treatment in prison. In Belfast prison they demanded the rights of political prisoners, and this in accordance with an arrangement made between Mr. Duke and the Lord Mayor of Dublin after the death of Thomas Ashe. But Ministers would keep no promise with Sinn

[1] *Nationality*, May 25, 1918. Arthur Griffith's message to East Cavan.

Fein, and the Belfast prisoners were treated as common criminals. As a protest they violated prison rules and wrecked part of the prison, and were punished by being handcuffed continuously, and by having to sleep on the bare floor. And when they approached the altar on Sunday, they were unable to use their hands. Dr. MacRory, Bishop of Down, as well as the Lord Mayor of Dublin intervened, asking that the prisoners should be interned or released; but it was in vain. Their ill-treatment continued for months, and though Mr. Dillon and his party returned to Parliament before this, they would give no effective assistance to Mr. T. M. Healy when he attacked Mr. Shortt. The latter under pressure of public opinion instituted an inquiry into the troubles at Belfast; but it was held by Judge Dodd, a furious political partisan, and before such a judge the prisoners refused to appear. Neither were they released at the end of 1918, nor their treatment ameliorated, when Mr. Shortt passed from Ireland to become Home Secretary, and Mr. MacPherson took his place.[1]

The war was then over. When the year 1918 dawned the prospects for the Allies were not bright. It was much that America had joined them; but time was required to mobilize her resources, to train and equip her men, to ensure a sufficiency of shipping and of food, to organize her industries at home, deprived of hundreds of thousands who were in the army. Meantime the Germans struck hard. Early in 1917 the Czar had abdicated and Russia became a Republic, resting for support on the approval of the masses. But the country quickly passed into the hands of extreme men, who wanted no war and soon made peace with Germany. These men formed a soviet or Communistic Republic and were called Bolsheviks, and the defection of the country at the end of 1917 was a serious blow to the Allies, a blow which would have proved fatal if America had not already joined them.

It was after Russia had abandoned the fight, and before

[1] Affidavit of Mr. Charles Kenny, a prisoner; letter of Lord Mayor and Dr. MacRory, March 19, 1918.

American resources were available in Europe that Germany, transferring large masses of men from Russia to France, fell upon the British armies, and by repeated and terrible blows drove the British from their positions. One whole British army was all but annihilated in April. It seemed as if the German plans to drive the English into the sea, to capture the Channel ports, and then to make a separate peace with France, would soon be carried to complete success. The French came to the aid of their allies and the retreat of the British armies was stayed. Then came the turn of the French, who had to bear the weight of new and terrible onslaughts on their front, and who lost largely in territory, men and guns. By the end of July, however, the tide turned. The German losses were so great that their blows had become weaker. The Americans had then come to France, and a million of fresh American troops were under the French General's command. Gifted with the highest military genius General Foch had bided his time, chosen his own ground, and when the Germans had suffered enfeebling exhaustion he struck back. In one month, from the end of July, he deprived the Germans of many of their coveted positions, took 100,000 prisoners with large quantities of guns and military stores, and had established such a superiority that victory for the Allies was assured. During August and September the Germans were in retreat. Their Bulgarian allies had unconditionally surrendered. Austria was starving and disorganized and falling back before the Italians, and Turkey was beaten by the English with the loss of 60,000 men. Unable any longer to continue the fight Germany appealed to President Wilson, and on the 11th November the Armistice was signed and the Great War was over.

The temptation to turn to personal account this astounding victory was too great to be resisted by Mr. Lloyd George, and in the end of November he dissolved Parliament. He could appeal with confidence to his record in the war. He had left his great post of Chancellor of the Exchequer to put fresh energy into the Munitions Department, and it was undeniable that the requisite war materials were supplied after he assumed command.

He was equally energetic as Minister of War, and in the dark hours that came since he became Prime Minister he always inspired confidence and hope. In him there was no sign of wavering or fear, no attempt to thwart his allies, and he spared no effort until the Germans were overthrown and the German war vessels were captives in British hands. It was largely a personal triumph, and if Mr. Lloyd George had appealed to the country as a Liberal, and cast aside his Tory and capitalist allies, he would probably have got a substantial majority. But he was satisfied with a Coalition Government in which he would hold the first place, and he appealed to the people jointly with Mr. Bonar Law. He boasted that under the Coalition radical legislation such as the extension of the franchise had been passed, and if the Coalition were continued, there would be more such legislation. He promised that he would hang the Kaiser for all his misdeeds, and he would make Germany pay the whole cost of the war. The voters believed him, and when the general election was over the old Liberal Party had almost ceased to be. The Coalition consisted of 338 Unionists, 136 Liberals and 10 National Democrats: while only 26 Liberals were returned. The ex-ministers, Messrs. Asquith, Samuel, M'Kenna, Runciman, Masterman, and Sir John Simon, were among the slain.

In Ireland the old Nationalist Party suffered a crushing defeat. Only six were returned, Mr. Devlin for Belfast and Captain Redmond for Waterford being among them. Mr. T. P. O'Connor was re-elected for Liverpool, and only 7 of the Irish Party survived to face the new House of Commons. There were 73 Sinn Feiners and 26 Unionists. Mr. Dillon was defeated in East Mayo by Mr. De Valera, who was also returned for Cavan and for North-west Tyrone. The Countess Markievicz was returned for a division of Dublin; and in many cases the Irish Party had not even put up a candidate. When they did it was usually a crushing defeat. The Sinn Feiners contested every division in Orange Ulster, though in many cases they polled but a few. But they won Derry City, one of the divisions of Fermanagh, and almost won the second, and they would have

won four more seats, if these had not been left to the Irish Party rather than have them fall into Orange hands.

Early in 1919 the Sinn Fein representatives met in Dublin. But they were no longer known as Members of Parliament, but as members of Dail Eireann, this being the Irish assembly charged with the work of the Irish Republic, provisionally established during the Rebellion of 1916. This Republic was now declared in actual existence, with Mr. De Valera as its President and Mr. Griffith as its Vice-President, and with ministers of finance, local government, &c., as its advisory and executive Cabinet. It would be necessary in the first place to obtain international recognition of the Republic. Meantime, the British Parliament would be ignored, its right to legislate for Ireland denied, its government thwarted, and its laws carried out only until Dail Eireann had replaced them by laws suitable to Irish conditions. Against all this the British Government would protest. Nevertheless the local bodies in Ireland could carry out the laws of Dail Eireann rather than those of the British Parliament. The British courts could be boycotted, and in their stead voluntary arbitration courts could be set up; and the peace could be preserved, not by British soldiers or police, but by the Irish Volunteers, acting as voluntary members of the Republican Army, and obeying the Ministry at Dublin.

The proceedings of the Dail were chiefly in Irish, but partly also in English. One of the members, Mr. Cathal Brugha, was appointed Speaker. All those selected for any Irish constituency were recognized as members of the Dail, and at the roll-call at each meeting both Unionists and Nationalists were called, and the spectators heard with a smile the name of Joseph Devlin and Edward Carson. In their opinions they differed much from the Sinn Feiners; but they had been elected by Irish constituencies, and in an Irish assembly, which was the governing authority of the nation, they had as much right to sit and vote as Mr. De Valera, or Mr. Griffith.

For more than a year the hopes of the Sinn Feiners were centred in the Peace Conference which would assemble after the

war. Mr. Dillon was fond of sneering at them, declaring that they did not represent Ireland, and could not speak for her, and would not be heard by the Conference. After the general election these sneers were out of place; for 73 out of 105 members was a large majority, and entitled to speak for the whole nation. And it was certain that the local elections, those for the County, Urban and Rural Councils, would repeat the story of the general election.

After the first session of the Dail, early in 1919, the work of preparing Ireland's case for the Peace Conference was taken in hand. Nor was there any doubt that Ireland's case would be favourably heard, so long as the American President had a part, as he would have, in the peace deliberations. Early in 1918 he had laid down the chief points that must be insisted upon if a war-weary world was to have a durable peace. They became known as President Wilson's Fourteen Points, and attracted world-wide attention. The first of them stipulated for open, not secret, diplomacy, the second for freedom of the seas, and other stipulations were for the independence of Poland and for the recognition of the peoples concerned when the claims of colonies were being adjusted. He was specially insistent on the freedom of the seas, and also that " peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game now for ever discredited of the Balance of Power ".[1]

But her supremacy at sea and the Balance of Power were the two props on which British power rested, and it was admitted that England would have joined France and Russia in 1914, even if Germany had not invaded Belgium. She would not have Germany in Antwerp any more than she would have Napoleon. Splendid isolation did not pay, and she joined France and Russia so as to curb Germany and continue the Balance of Power.[2] In the stress of war she listened to Mr. Wilson, but she had little love for some of his Fourteen Points. And she was equally impatient with him when he asked in September, 1918, " If the

[1] Address to Congress, Feb., 1918. [2] *The Times*, March 8, 1915.

military power of any nation would be allowed to determine the fortune of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?" Again he asked: "Shall peoples be ruled and dominated even in their own internal affairs by arbitrary and irresponsible force, or by their own will and choice?"[1] England was then in need of Irish fighting men, and she circulated this pamphlet, thinking it would stimulate recruiting. The Government also announced that a Home Rule Bill was in hands, and would be pushed through, Mr. Shortt complaining that in this good work he could get no assistance from Mr. Dillon. In the next month, however, Germany sued for peace on the basis of the Fourteen Points, and an armistice was signed. The German and Austrian Emperors had then abdicated, and both countries had become republics. Bulgaria and Turkey had also submitted, and the once dreaded German fleet was in British hands. And when all this had happened, English enthusiasm for Mr. Wilson's principles cooled, and the Home Rule Bill was laid aside.

At the Peace Conference, which assembled in Paris in January, 1919, Ireland hoped for nothing from English justice. But President Wilson could not forget his own speeches, nor the reasons why America entered the war, and would surely help Irishmen to obtain their freedom. He had been helped to power by the Irish vote in America. He knew that men of Irish blood had rushed in thousands into the army and navy, that many had fought under the Stars and Stripes, and had, after hurling back the Germans, found a soldier's grave in French soil. But if these facts furnished ground for hope there was ground also for misgiving. Mr. Wilson was English by descent and Protestant in religion, and had more sympathy for England and Protestantism than for Ireland and the Catholic faith. He was high in the ranks of freemasonry and had already thwarted the Catholic Huerta in Mexico to befriend the Mexican freemasons. And in the Great War he was helping the French and Italian freemasons in their cherished design to dismember Austria and reduce Germany to the rank of an inferior power. Yet he found it hard

[1] "The Things Worth Fighting for".

to flout Irish-American opinion. All over America great meetings had been held demanding self-determination for Ireland; and when Mr. Wilson was leaving for Europe to attend the Peace Conference he assured Father Fielding of Chicago that the Irish question would have his most earnest attention to the fullest extent of his power.[1]

Not a few then and since have asked if Mr. Wilson was sincere. He had written eloquently of democracy and freedom, but he had not put these principles in practice in his government, and was one of the most autocratic and despotic Presidents who ever filled the position. In labour disputes, in the army and navy, on the question of conscription, in war and finance and general administration, he had often interfered as a dictator and on the side of the strong, but never on the side of freedom. Accustomed in earlier life to rule a university he treated his ministers, and even the Senate and Congress, as he treated a class of university students, and when he had given his decision the last word had been said. In reality he overrated his own abilities, and seems to have disliked having around him men of independence or superior ability. And the expert advisers he brought with him to Paris were not men of outstanding talents, who would be likely to throw himself into the shade. He expected that they would all look up to him for guidance, and never put their own judgment in competition with his.

His greatest mistake was his coming to Europe. His place was at Washington and not at Paris, and there in the healthier atmosphere of his own capital city he could have guided and controlled his representatives at Paris. Knowing nothing of the wiles and stratagems of European politicians, of the quibbles and intrigues and lies of European diplomacy, he came, as he thought, to set justice on her throne, to bind up the wounds of a stricken world; and he was received and honoured in Paris and London and Rome as befitted the head of the mightiest Republic on earth. His character was soon read, his weak points discovered, his vanity flattered by skilful hands. At Paris he was

[1] *Catholic Bulletin*, Jan., 1919.

cheered through the streets until the crowds were hoarse, and the illustrated papers depicted him with the Wilson smile. In London the streets were decorated; his residence was Buckingham Palace, the guesthouse of Kings; at Rome honours were showered on him.

Then the Peace Conference began at Paris, and the friends of freedom soon found that Mr. Wilson was a mere novice in diplomacy, completely outclassed by such men as Clemenceau and Lloyd George. In spite of his reprobation of secret treaties the secret treaty of 1915 between France, England, Russia and Italy, by which for Italy's sake the Pope would be excluded from the Peace Conference, was allowed to stand. There was not a word about the Freedom of the Seas, or about the Balance of Power; and the very first of the Fourteen Points was at once thrown overboard, when the delegates agreed to hold their sessions in secret. The smaller States were treated like poor relations. They had delegates at Paris who occasionally were present at discussions; but the main points were settled, separately and secretly, by the Big Four, as they came to be called, these being Mr. Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Signor Orlando representing Italy.

Clemenceau had scanty respect for the Fourteen Points, or for Mr. Wilson's proposed League of Nations, which would settle all future international disputes and abolish all future wars. His desire was to break up the German Empire, to reduce her population and her territory, to debilitate her economic life. She could not be trusted, and in the interests of France must be rendered impotent for all time.[1] Mr. Lloyd George who had vowed before Heaven that England coveted no territory, wanted English supremacy at sea; he wanted the German fleet and the German colonies, and he got them by pretending to support Mr. Wilson, and in reality supporting Clemenceau. The latter had always been friendly to England, and he helped very materially to make the Treaty of Versailles an English peace.

Mr. Wilson was helpless. He had neither the readiness of

[1] Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, pp. 32–3.

resource of Clemenceau nor the agility of Lloyd George. He could lay down principles but was unable to apply them; he groped blindly through a mass of details, and was bewildered by the language of diplomacy. Gradually he was manœuvred out of the positions he took up, surrendered without knowing that he had done so, and thought he had done well when he had got a League of Nations, which only guaranteed the injustice and spoliation that had been done.[1] And thus it happened that, in signing the Treaty of Versailles, President Wilson was guilty of the most shameful betrayal in history.

Irishmen everywhere had special reason to complain. When the Mansion House case against conscription was sent to President Wilson it never got the courtesy of a reply. When the President on his way to the Peace Conference was tendered the freedom of the City of Dublin he ignored the offer; but it was noticed that a similar offer from Belfast met with a prompt letter of thanks. An Irish city counted for little in his eyes, but an Irish Catholic city was beneath contempt. Dail Eireann appointed three of its members, Messrs. De Valera, Griffith, and Plunkett, as delegates to the Peace Conference early in 1919. The two former were in prison without trial and would at once have been released and admitted to the Conference if only Mr. Wilson used his influence with his friend Mr. Lloyd George. But he made no effort, and when Mr. Sean T. O'Kelly, another member of the Dail, was sent as Ambassador to Paris and called on the President there, he was told to put his request in writing. When he did so, asking from the Peace Conference recognition for the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, Mr. Wilson was again unresponsive, and returned to America leaving Ireland out in the cold.

In America, and by Americans, pressure was brought to bear on him which he found difficult to resist. In the end of February a Convention of the Irish race, attended by 5000 delegates, met at Philadelphia, and a resolution, proposed by Cardinal Gibbons, was passed unanimously asking both the President and Congress to see that Ireland was given the right of self-determination.

[1] Keynes, pp. 34–47.

This is what the President himself in a speech at Boston insisted on for Poland, and Armenia and Czecho-Slovakia. But he had nothing to say about Ireland, and when specially appointed delegates from the Philadelphia Convention interviewed him, before his return to Europe, he would promise nothing. And this was immediately after Congress had urged him to bring Ireland's case before the Peace Conference.

He returned to Paris and remained unsympathetic. Three prominent American citizens, Messrs. Walsh, Dunne, and Ryan, were then sent as delegates from the Irish in America, prepared themselves to advocate Ireland's claims before the Peace Conference. But even this President Wilson would not ask for them. He even flouted a resolution of the American Senate advocating freedom for Ireland by a vote of 60 to 1. Flattered and fooled by Clemenceau and Lloyd George, he forgot Ireland and forgot his own Fourteen Points. Instead of making the world safe for democracy as he promised, he made it safe for hypocrisy. His weakness and treachery so disgusted the members of his own American Commission, that a majority of them resigned their positions. In the Treaty of Versailles and in the League of Nations America as well as Ireland had been betrayed, and it became necessary for the American Senate to refuse the ratification of such a treaty so as to save their country from dishonour.

CHAPTER XV

The Rule of Force

The conduct of English statesmen towards Ireland in recent years has been a reproduction, in altered circumstances and times, of the conduct of English statesmen in the past. If the Irish appealed to reason and justice, and were peaceful, no concessions were made to them. The leaders were told that they did not speak with the authoritative voice of the people, that the people, being peaceable and quiescent, wanted no change. If, on the other hand, there was disturbance and disorder and outrage, the blame was thrown on the leaders, who were lawless men, and for whom the proper treatment was prosecution and imprisonment. England would not be intimidated, and would not put a premium on crime. She would first put down lawlessness with a strong hand and then examine Irish claims, and perhaps concede.

This was the attitude of Mr. Lloyd George in 1919 and 1920. While crime continued in Ireland nothing could be done; let the shooting of police and soldiers cease, and England would listen and be generous. But Mr. Lloyd George forgot that the case for Home Rule had been long since made good, and yet there was no Home Rule until 1914, and then only the wretched Act of that year, which was never enforced. In 1917, 340 Irishmen and Irishwomen were arrested for political offences, 24 leaders were deported, 2 civilians were killed by police, and nobody punished, 5 persons died of ill-treatment in prison, 100 were wounded in baton and bayonet charges, newspapers and meetings were suppressed: and all the time not a single policeman or soldier was murdered. Nor was there in 1918, although in that year 1106 Irishmen and Irishwomen were imprisoned for political

offences, 17 leaders were deported, 5 civilians killed by Crown forces and nobody punished, meetings and newspapers were suppressed, and 260 private houses were raided.[1] On the side of the people, during the whole year, not a single policeman or soldier was shot. On the side of the Government, though promises to settle the Irish question were made in abundance, nothing was done.

Nothing can better describe the condition of Ireland in the middle of 1919 than the report of the American delegates who had come to Paris to help the Irish cause, and then had come to visit Ireland. All were native-born Americans, but of Irish descent. Mr. Frank Walsh was a lawyer who had done important work during the war as a Labour Commissioner. Mr. Dunne was also a lawyer, educated at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, and Trinity College, Dublin, formerly Governor of the State of Illinois. Mr. Ryan was a banker. All three had experience of public affairs, and were practised public speakers. They were members of the Committee appointed by the Philadelphia Race Convention, " To obtain for the delegates selected by the people of Ireland a hearing at the Peace Conference, and to place before the Conference, if that hearing be not given, the case of Ireland; her insistence upon her right of self-determination and to international recognition of the republican form of government established by her people ".

In Paris President Wilson told Mr. Walsh that the application for safe-conducts to Paris for Messrs. De Valera, Griffith, and Plunkett was a reasonable request and should be granted. There were, however, many delays. Mr. Lloyd George was busy and wanted to see the American delegates, and yet was in no hurry for the interview. Pending this interview, Mr. De Valera sent an invitation to Mr. Walsh to visit Ireland. The necessary passports were immediately made out, Mr. Lloyd George wishing that the delegates would visit all parts of Ireland, and especially Belfast. On the other hand, the Irish envoys at Paris, Messrs. O'Kelly and Gavan Duffy, urged on Mr. Walsh to visit the jails in Ireland, especially in the larger centres.

[1] Compiled from Newspapers.

In Ireland the three Americans found militarism everywhere. There were 15,000 military police and 100,000 soldiers fully equipped for the field, with lorries, armoured cars, tanks, bombing planes, machine-guns, and heavy artillery. The three Americans found that many were imprisoned for purely political offences, such as giving expression to republican opinions. Visiting Mountjoy Prison in Dublin they found many such—journalists, lawyers, business men, artisans, and others. Some of them confined for a month had no charge preferred against them; all of them were denied the right of trial by jury. They were emaciated and ill-nourished, much worse in appearance than the German prisoners in France. " They were confined for the most part in groups, the majority of them being locked up in steel cages, built in the yards of the prison. These cages are exact duplicates of those used for wild animals in the larger Zoological Gardens, such as Lincoln Park and the Bronx in the United States." Political prisoners were also kept in underground cells and some were beaten and starved and " kept for days with their hands handcuffed behind their backs ". Westport was then under martial law, and the delegates, in spite of the passports they held, would not be allowed to enter the town.

Summing up, the American delegates declared—that within a few months ten citizens had been killed by soldiers and police, all of these murders being unpunished; that hundreds were detained in prison without charge; that five had died in prison from ill-treatment; that prisoners were handcuffed for several days and nights, with their hands behind their backs, being then unable to feed themselves or attend to the calls of nature; that prisoners had often to sleep on the bare floors, and sometimes were beaten in their cells, and that, as a result, in not a few instances, men had lost their health or their reason. They added that " the right of privacy no longer exists in Ireland ". Houses were entered at all hours by armed men, property destroyed, the occupants beaten or carried away to prison, while their dependents were allowed to starve. The American delegates did not ask the world to accept these statements on their own

Central News

DE VALERA SPEAKING AT THE OPENING SESSION OF DAIL EIREANN

testimony, but asked for an impartial committee of inquiry, promising to produce ample testimony that the charges were true.

Mr. Shortt had ceased to be Chief Secretary since the beginning of the year. He had come to Ireland a believer in the German plot, and had acquiesced in the deportation of the Sinn Fein leaders, and made apologies for the atrocious treatment of the political prisoners in Belfast prison. Yet, from the scanty items of knowledge that percolate from Cabinet meetings to the public, it was learned that his work in Ireland was not congenial to him. He felt that the Irish question should be settled, and was willing to settle it by the grant of Dominion Home Rule. He apologized for repression because it was the policy of the Cabinet, and he willingly exchanged the post of Chief Secretary for that of Home Secretary.

His successor was called Ian MacPherson, a Scotsman, as his name indicates. Whether he was a relative of MacPherson, the forger of Ossian, does not appear. But he certainly inherited his capacity for untruth. He began public life as the declared friend of the Scottish crofters; but they soon learned to distrust him, and had good reason for their distrust. As Under-Secretary for War he considered it his duty always to hide the truth, and earned a reputation for glib mis-statement which caused the House of Commons to distrust everything he said. Nor was his answer to the case made by the American delegates convincing, except as to its utter inadequacy. There were, he said, only twenty-eight political prisoners in Mountjoy; but Mr. MacPherson's idea of a political prisoner was not the usually accepted one. He bluntly denied the delegates' statement as to the character of the cells, though the delegates had actually seen them. And the allegations about the treatment of prisoners, their detention without trial, and the raids on houses and property of republicans, as well as the murders by Crown forces he denied. But he took care not to submit these matters to an impartial inquiry. Nor had the public any hesitation about choosing between the American delegates and Mr. MacPherson.

After a short stay in Ireland, where they were everywhere

received with enthusiasm, these delegates returned to Paris. Their general report on Irish conditions, which they had already presented to President Wilson, they now supplemented by stating that reprisals had already begun in Ireland against persons who furnished them with information against the British Crown forces. Nevertheless, they were ready to prove before an impartial tribunal that police and soldiers had habitually beaten prisoners in their cells. They would prove this by the testimony of witnesses who had been beaten, of others who had seen the blood on the cell walls, and of some who had, as a result of such beatings, been maimed for life.[1]

If zeal and ability could have succeeded in placing Ireland's case before the Peace Conference, Ireland would have received her freedom. But President Wilson would not move. He would do nothing to get safe-conducts for Messrs. De Valera, Griffith, and Plunkett. He would do nothing to procure a hearing before the Conference for the American delegates. He would not put Ireland's case before the Peace Conference, himself. He allowed his Fourteen Points to be laughed at in Paris. He gave no help to the Koreans to put their case against Japan. He answered the Egyptian demands for a hearing by recognizing the British Protectorate. And he betrayed China by the surrender of Shantung. He was more reactionary even than the British Ministers and more unjust to Germany, so reactionary and unjust that some of his own American colleagues resigned their positions. When President Wilson was leaving for Paris all America regarded him as a hero; when he returned, all thinking men knew that he had not only betrayed Ireland, but had betrayed democracy throughout the world.[2]

The scene was then changed from Europe to America. Messrs. Walsh, Dunne, and Ryan, having done all that three able men could do, returned home, resolved to appeal from the American President to the American people. They were there joined by

[1] Copies of Delegates' Report, Chief Secretary's Reply, and Letter of Delegates to President Wilson.

[2] "The Betrayal at Paris", by A. A. Berle, junior, one of the American Peace Officers at Paris, New York *Nation*, Aug. 9, 1919.

a valuable ally in the person of Mr. De Valera. In some unexplained fashion he had managed to escape in February from Lincoln Prison, and making his way back to Dublin, baffled the detectives on his track. In March Mr. Pierce M'Cann, M.P., had died from ill-treatment in an English prison, and public opinion was so roused that all the political prisoners in England were set free. Mr. De Valera then felt safe to emerge from his place of concealment, and when the American delegates came to Ireland he publicly welcomed them. When these delegates were unable to procure him safe-conduct to the Paris Conference he determined to proceed to America, and arrived there in the end of June. Again, as in his escape from Lincoln Prison, his movements were secret and have never since been explained.

A man who was born in New York and educated in Ireland; who had fought for Ireland in open rebellion and had been sentenced to death; who was President of the Irish Republic by the votes of the Irish people; who had broken through the bolts and bars of an English prison, and then had reached America in spite of an army of British spies, was no common man, and was sure to get a warm welcome in America. Nor did he prove unworthy of it. For he was soon discovered to be modest and earnest and sincere, absolutely unselfish, never posing for effect, and intent only on getting the help of America for Ireland. Like Parnell he was not an orator, but he was well-informed and a student, put his case clearly, and delighted his friends without stooping to abuse his opponents. As a fervent Catholic he readily won the support of the Church. The perils he passed through, borne without complaint, brought all the Irish to his side, as well as the oppressed of every land; and never did an Irish leader, not even Parnell, get such a reception from America. Archbishops, bishops, clergy of all denominations, senators and congressmen, mayors of cities and governors of states, learned judges and great lawyers, university professors and great merchants, soldiers and state officials thronged his platforms. Several universities voted him honorary degrees. State governors officially welcomed him. New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco,

with other cities of lesser note, voted him their freedom. He asked for a loan for the Irish Republic and within a few months ten million dollars were subscribed. He asked for recognition of the Irish Republic, and by the end of August the State legislatures of Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, and Pennsylvania had all declared for Irish independence.

In his eagerness to have a League of Nations President Wilson had signed the Treaty of Versailles, which gave England and France everything, and which imposed conditions on Germany impossible to fulfil. And he had allowed the English to so transform his League of Nations Covenant that it secured them all the possessions they had for all time. This was done by Clause X which bound America to aid England, if England were attacked, even by her revolting colonists. This not only prevented Ireland from ever hoping for independence by foreign assistance, but bound America to help England in crushing any Irish rebellion.

Mr. De Valera concentrated all his attacks on the Tenth Clause and soon roused American opposition to it. In September he had the satisfaction of seeing the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate take up the case of Ireland, when her claims were put with great cogency and eloquence by Mr. Walsh, Mr. Burke Cochrane and others.[1] The Committee's report was favourable, and early in the new year the Senate rejected the League of Nations Covenant. It is true that there was not the necessary two-thirds majority to reject the Covenant altogether, and that Mr. Wilson obstinately refused to compromise. This meant a deadlock. The Treaty could not pass without the League of Nations Covenant, which was part of it; nor could the Treaty be thrown out without the co-operation of the President, so long as the necessary two-thirds majority was wanting. Nothing, then, was left but to await the coming Presidential election. Until then, there was, nominally, a state of war with Germany.

Meanwhile savage coercion continued in Ireland. In his

[1] Official Record of the Proceedings.

Lenten Pastoral Cardinal Logue complained that Irishmen were not ruled by the ordinary law, "but are subject to a drastic military code under which actions, otherwise harmless or trivial, become grave offences, and are pitilessly punished".[1] This was strong language from one so moderate in his political views, and ought to have caused the Government to pause in its mad career of repression. But it had no effect. In June the Bishops in a common pronouncement had to complain of the Irish Government as unrestrained military rule. "It is the rule of the sword, utterly unsuited to a civilized nation and supremely provocative of disorder and chronic rebellion. . . . The acts of violence which we have to deplore, and they are few, spring from this cause alone. For mere trifles, for what in any country would be the rights of all men, Irish people have been sent to jail under savage sentences." They gratefully thanked the Senate and people of America for their helpful sympathy to Ireland in the hour of her distress, and they again asked that the Government of Ireland should be the free choice of all her people.[2]

The appeal was unheeded. The old year passed away and the new year dawned on an Ireland still held down by force. And again the Bishops were compelled to speak out. "The principle of disregarding national feeling and national rights . . . had become a settled rule of Government in Ireland. The right of Ireland to choose her own government not only was denied to her, but every organ for the expression of her national life has been ruthlessly suppressed, and her people subjected to an iron rule of oppression as cruel and unjust as it is ill-advised and out of date. The result is what might have been easily foreseen—violent collisions and retaliations between exasperated sections of the people, and the forces of oppression, growing even more serious and eventuating too often in the most sorrowful tragedies on both sides."[3]

The Bishops had also to protest against other evils as coming from the regime of Lord French and Mr. MacPherson. In the

[1] *Catholic Directory*, 1920. [2] Resolutions, June, 1919.
[3] Bishops' Resolutions, Jan. 27, 1920.

field of education there was much room for improvement. The teachers in the primary schools were underpaid, the grants for buildings and maintenance of buildings insufficient; and the control of the whole system was in the hands of Commissioners, unrepresentative, inefficient, and out of touch with popular needs. Mr. MacPherson's remedy for this was to replace the Boards of Primary and Intermediate Education by an Education Department consisting of the Chief Secretary, the Vice-President of the Agricultural and Technical Department, and a permanent member appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant. These three would regulate the appointment and tenure of teachers, control the books and courses of studies, levy local rates through local committees for the upkeep of buildings as well as for school requisites and teachers' salaries. This would be putting the education of the country into alien hands, it would mean " Irish Education in foreign fetters ". And the Bishops say that " until Ireland is governed by her own Parliament we shall resist by every means in our power any attempt to abolish the Boards of Primary, Intermediate and Technical Education ".[1] Irishmen had some confidence, though not much, in the existing Education Boards; but they could have none in an educational system modelled and managed from London; and Ireland, already grievously and shamefully overtaxed, would submit for such a system to no additional burdens on her local rates. Mr. MacPherson, in face of such opposition, reluctantly and ungraciously retraced his steps, and his Bill never became law.

Against coercion it seemed useless for the Bishops to protest. As there was military rule in 1919, there was military rule in 1920, only it was of a more savage kind. The activities of Dublin Castle recalled the horrors of 1798. From its gloomy portals issued a constant stream of proclamations ordering searches and raids and declaring everything it disliked illegal. And these raids and searches and suppressions were ruthlessly carried out by police and soldiers, often with every circumstance of brutality. Concerts, dances, Gaelic League meetings, athletic sports, even

[1] Bishops' Resolutions, Jan. 27, 1920.

fairs and markets, were all declared illegal and savagely suppressed. Dail Eireann was proclaimed an illegal assembly, and, except a few of its members who secretly got to America, all were at one time or other thrown into prison. The capture of the city and urban councils by the Sinn Feiners in January, 1920, was answered by Dublin Castle with the imprisonment of the Dublin Corporation. And when the Republicans captured the county and district councils in the following June, the elected councillors became marked men, and in many cases had to face provocation and imprisonment.[1]

Mr. MacPherson declared in Parliament that the law-abiding had nothing to fear. But whoever incurred the suspicion of Dublin Castle ceased to be law-abiding, and sometimes even Unionists were not immune. In the two years ending March, 1920, the raids on private houses alone numbered more than 20,000. These were often at dead of night. Tanks and military lorries traversed the cities and towns, and the peaceful citizen was roused from his sleep by a loud knocking at his door. If it was not opened at once the door was burst in by soldiers, the rooms searched, the furniture scattered or broken, the floors sometimes torn up, desks broken rather than unlocked, and in not a few cases money and jewellery taken and never returned. The husband was torn from his wife's arms and carried away to prison. The mother was not allowed to remain in the same room with her children; and nervous prostration, permanent ill-health or premature confinement were frequent results of these raids. If the military officer was a gentleman, as an officer should be, he acted considerately and at least was not rude. But there were officers who were not gentlemen and not even sober, and who had no better term for the Irish than Irish swine. In such cases curses and threats were freely used; the revolver was always ready; the furniture was broken without scruple, and the money and valuables taken without shame. Nor was there any apology when nothing incriminating was found.[2]

Outside of Belfast and its neighbourhood, controlled and pro-

[1] Childers, *Ireland under Military Rule*, pp. 27–8. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 8–16.

tected by Sir Edward Carson, all Ireland was outlawed. Dublin Castle, with the Defence of the Realm Act as its instrument, and Mr. MacPherson as its apologist, was making war on opinion, but not on crime. If a newspaper criticized the Government policy of repression, soldiers with trench helmets, rifles and revolvers entered its premises and dismantled and carried off its printing presses. If a public meeting was sought to be held it was proclaimed and forcibly suppressed. County or district councillors who prepared a resolution supporting Sinn Fein were marked down as dangerous, and in due course were thrown into prison or deported to England. Often they were not tried at all; but if they were it was by military officers, prejudiced and ignorant of law, who had no sense of justice, but only of punishment. Those who protested against the sentence imposed, or against their treatment in prison, were treated like the Belfast prisoners in 1917, who were kicked, cuffed, deluged with a hose-pipe, handcuffed, compelled to eat off the floor of their cells. In Mountjoy they adopted the weapon of the hunger-strike, a favourite weapon of the Suffragettes in past years. But, unlike the Suffragettes, there was no pity for the Irish prisoners. Let them die, said Lord French. Nor was it until they were at the point of death and the whole nation watched and waited for the tragedy that was sure to come, that the prison doors were thrown open.

It was at this date, April, 1920, that Mr. MacPherson disappeared from the scene and a new Chief Secretary took his place in the person of Sir Hamar Greenwood. For Mr. MacPherson there was no regret. The Orangemen of Belfast whose applause he valued so much despised him. The military officers and reactionary landlords with whom he loved to consort at the Kildare Street Club patronized him because they found him a useful tool, but they tolerated him and that was all. The Sinn Feiners suffered under his rule, but were not intimidated by him. In Parliament he equivocated and was provocative and insolent towards the Nationalists, because they were few. But Mr. Devlin and Mr. MacVeagh chastised his flippant insolence with severity;

and at last his master Mr. Lloyd George became so satisfied of his incompetence that he deprived him of the high office of Chief Secretary and gave him the unimportant office of Minister of Pensions.

It was not of good omen that the new Chief Secretary was a renegade Liberal, a professing Home Ruler who was at the same time willing to wear the livery of the Coalition. Both Mr. Shortt and Mr. MacPherson professed to be Home Rulers; but their only service to Ireland was to oppress and to defame her. Sir Hamar Greenwood came with greater powers. Lord French had given ample proof of his incapacity either for civil or military government, and henceforth he would be a mere figurehead. The army was placed under General Macready with very extensive powers. General Tudor was sent over to organize a new force, the Auxiliary Police, all ex-soldiers and with duties half military, and half police. There was still the old Royal Irish Constabulary under their Inspector-General. At the head of all was Sir Hamar Greenwood, whose business was to direct and advise and see that justice was done to all.

If he came to conciliate, to give Ireland the right of self-determination, so much lauded by politicians during the war,[1] his task was an easy one. Given her freedom Ireland would become a firm friend of England. No doubt the Sinn Feiners wanted a Republic, and this England was reluctant to concede. But a large mass of moderate opinion in Ireland would be satisfied with the status of a dominion within the Empire. Republic or Dominion, Ireland would become England's friend, and ancient enmity would disappear. But it soon appeared that the Chief Secretary favoured coercion rather than concession, and this being his policy he found formidable difficulties in his path. Since the General Election there was a Republic, with Mr. De Valera as its President and ministers to advise him. There was an army, partly armed and secretly organized, and in four-fifths of

[1] "Self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril." (Pres. Wilson to Congress, Feb. 11, 1918.) He was then regarded as a prophet in England.

Ireland local government was in responsible hands. For the new councils had pledged allegiance to Dail Eireann, and repudiated the Local Government Board and the British Government.

Already these two governments, that of the Republic and the British Government, had come into serious collision. The police were Irish and for the most part Catholic. A good proportion were farmers' sons in touch with the people, and in early life in sympathy with the people's political views. At the police depot in Dublin they were transformed. The farmer's son was taught to forswear his former political opinions, to distrust and even abhor every political movement that was for the people's good, to regard the enemies of the British Government as his own, to pimp and spy on those of his own creed, to look to promotion as the greatest good in life, and to be willing to do anything if it brought promotion and higher pay. Not all of the police recruits, however, thus succumbed to temptation. Some came from the Government depot still unspoiled, and the policeman's jacket often concealed a heart that beat for Ireland. But a large proportion had become thoroughly denationalized, and hated Sinn Fein as they hated Home Rule. And they were ready to spy upon popular leaders and glibly to swear away their liberty and their lives; and it was notorious that every enemy of Ireland, every coercionist who would trample on her people was loud in his praises of the loyalty and devotion of the Irish police.

These men the Republican army resolved to attack, and in the first half of 1920 police barracks were attacked and burned in every county in Ireland. In some cases the police were surprised and disarmed and had necessarily to surrender, and in such cases, though the barracks was burned, the police were unharmed. In other cases they surrendered only when their ammunition was exhausted, or when the barracks was blazing about their ears. In every case they were first called upon to surrender in the name of the Irish Republic, and when they refused rifle shots rang out and bombs were thrown. Nor could they get assistance, as the Republicans had taken the precaution of cutting the telegraph wires and blocking the roads around with

felled trees. Usually the police made a gallant defence, and though some were wounded they refused to yield, and often the attackers were compelled to retire. At last the Government ordered the evacuation of the smaller barracks, and the police retired to certain centres, where their own numbers, the strength of the barrack building, and the proximity of the military rendered them immune from attack.

Then the Volunteers took up police work and over wide areas kept order at fairs and markets, at sport and race meetings. They enforced the Sunday Closing Act, compelled public houses to close at regular hours, and apprehended thieves and restored stolen property to the owners. Their work was completed by Arbitration Courts, set up by authority of Dail Eireann. The British courts became deserted, and to the Sinn Fein courts lawyers and litigants freely came. Cases were heard with patience and care, and the fairness of the decisions and the impartiality of the arbitrators earned the praise of Unionists as well as Nationalists In a short time hundreds of policemen and magistrates had resigned, and in many districts not a single magistrate could be found. There were still Resident Magistrates in the Petty Sessions Courts, but they had no cases before them, nor had the County Court judges at Quarter Sessions; and the judges at assizes were almost speechless with rage when jurors refused to attend and litigants went with their cases to the Sinn Fein Courts. When the county and district councils ignored the Local Government Board, and proclaimed their allegiance to Dail Eireann, the paralysis of British government in Ireland was complete. British soldiers and police were an army of occupation, and that was all; and Sir Edward Carson declared with truth in Parliament that in three out of the four provinces the British Government was beaten.

It was a chance for statesmanship had there been such in charge of the British Empire. But a Coalition is not a very effective instrument of government, and the Coalition under Mr. Lloyd George was the worst that English history had known. Tricked and deceived, prosecuted and imprisoned, and despairing

of any justice from England, the Irish at last had repudiated England. At the British Labour Party Conference in June a resolution was passed calling for the withdrawal of the British troops from Ireland, and the setting up of an Irish Constituent Assembly which would have power to settle the status of Ireland. But this would not suit the Coalition. Force, it was plain to all, was no remedy for Irish ills, but it was the only remedy the Coalition would employ, and though there had been drastic coercion, there would be more drastic coercion still. Not content with the ample powers given by the Crimes Act and the Defence of the Realm Act, the Restoration of Order Bill was rushed through Parliament without discussion and amendment, and at once put in force.

Then the armoury of savage repression was complete. The military authorities were supreme and could declare anything and everything unlawful. Meetings, concerts, dances, fairs and markets could be broken up without warning. Horses and vehicles could be seized, travelling restricted, buildings commandeered, or even destroyed, the curfew enforced, licensed houses closed. Raids for arms could be carried out at any hour, and persons searched, and it was unlawful to carry arms, to wear any distinctive uniform or badge, to have any military or police code. Nor was there any remedy against the crimes of military or police. Coroners' inquests were abolished and were replaced by secret military inquiries. Finally any county council repudiating the Local Government Board was deprived of Government local grants, though such moneys were the proceeds of Irish taxation.[1]

The spirit in which this legislation was to be carried out was outlined in June by Colonel Smyth, Divisional Commissioner for Munster. Addressing the police at Listowel, he regretted that Sinn Fein had been so successful, that the police had been compelled to be on the defensive. Now, with plenty of troops and police from England, the tables would be turned. When a police barracks was destroyed, the police would commandeer the best house in the town, throwing the occupants out into

[1] Restoration of Order Act.

the gutter. Police patrols, seeing a suspicious-looking person, ought to shoot if necessary without warning. Hunger-strikers would be allowed to die, and Sinn Feiners would be deported and never heard of again. Asking for the co-operation of the assembled constables their spokesman answered by taking off his cap, belt and bayonet, and laying them on the table said: " Take these as a present from me and to hell with you, you are a murderer ". Colonel Smyth ordered the speaker's arrest, but the others threatened that if this were done they would shoot, and the room would run red with blood.[1] The policeman was not arrested, and the Government professed to be horrified. And the next week Colonel Smyth was shot dead in Cork.

At Listowel he was certainly indiscreet, but in reality he was acting as the Irish Government and the British Cabinet wished. Colonel Price, a bitter anti-Irish Irishman, became Assistant Inspector-General. To replace the constables who had resigned there came from England hundreds and even thousands of ex-soldiers, brutalized by the war, some of whom had served terms in jail. They were on probation, wearing a uniform which was half police and half military, and soon acquired an evil reputation as Black and Tans. Even worse than these were the cadets or auxiliary police. They were ex-officers, in most cases anti-Irish and anti-Catholic, and though nominally subject to General Tudor they were in reality free to do as they pleased. The officers and soldiers naturally looked for guidance to General Macready, and he declared that the Sinn Fein leaders were well known, and that the Irish question would be settled if fifty of them were shot dead.

Already in 1919 soldiers in Fermoy, by way of reprisal for an attack on them by Volunteers, broke loose and wrecked the greater part of the town. The following January, police and soldiers attacked persons and wrecked houses in Thurles. In March Mr. MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, was murdered and the coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the police. In May soldiers shot down inoffensive townsmen in

[1] *Young Ireland*, July 17, 1920.

Miltownmalbay. In June Orange mobs attacked the Catholics in Derry, with the connivance of the Crown forces. In July thousands of Catholic workers were expelled from their employment. Reprisals on the part of Crown troops had then become systematic, and when a soldier or policeman was attacked the Crown forces broke loose, shot down civilians and burned the next town. This was the fate of Limerick, Tuam, Lisburn, Lahinch, Ennistymon Templemore, Tubbercurry, and Mallow; and as the year was nearing its end the greater part of Cork was burned to ashes. Nearly forty creameries were burned down, and shooting of individuals was of daily and especially of nightly occurrence. In Tipperary men were taken from their beds and shot before their parents' eyes. In Galway Father Griffin was enticed from his house and murdered, and then thrown into a bog. Near Dunmanway the aged parish priest, Canon Magner, was shot dead on the high road. Near Tuam young men were publicly flogged. In prison flogging and torture were used, and a young university student, Kevin Barry, while awaiting execution was tortured because he refused to become an informer. Such was the terror that newspapers were afraid to publish half of what reached them. Newspaper correspondents went about their work in deadly peril: and individuals, threatened and even tortured, refused to speak of what they had suffered, lest they might have worse to endure.

For all these horrors Sir Hamar Greenwood became the willing apologist. He protected every ruffian who wore and disgraced the King's uniform, the Black and Tan who looted and murdered, the Auxiliary who flogged innocent and unarmed boys, the bullies in rural garrisons who kicked and cuffed as they went along, rolled young men in the gutter or threw them into some lake or river. Questioned in Parliament the Chief Secretary denied all these atrocities. The troops were merely hunting down a murder gang, and were only doing their duty. He protested that newspaper correspondents had nothing to fear; that the tales of looting and flogging and torturing in prison were pure fiction, that no creameries had been burned by Crown forces, though he had at

the time in his possession ample evidence to the contrary. He disregarded the evidence of eye witnesses, but would not submit such evidence to the test of an inquiry. He did not, however, deny, and could not, that under his supervision, and at Government expense, a publication called the *Weekly Summary* was sent free to all police barracks, and each week incited to murder. In diplomacy language is often used to conceal men's thoughts, and in Parliament this use of language is not unknown. But Sir Hamar Greenwood's lying was so clumsy that it was patent to all the world. Public speakers jeered at him as having debased public life. Newspapers wrote of him as a clown and a buffoon. Everyone recognized that he had no ability except to be insolent and untruthful. The Reactionary Unionists, whom he served with a pervert's zeal, despised him. And in England there was a feeling of satisfaction that this strange specimen of a Minister of the Crown was an adventurer from Canada, and not an English gentleman.

The disciple is not above his master, and in all that he did Sir Hamar Greenwood knew that he had the approval of the Prime Minister. In twenty years what a change there was in Lloyd George! The Radical had turned reactionary. The savage assailant of the House of Lords was the trusted colleague of Lord Milner and Lord Curzon. The eloquent advocate of the toiler had become the champion of capital against labour. The flogging of the Indians and Egyptians and the bombing of the Arabs he readily defended, and he enforced a treaty which doomed millions of Austrians to starvation and death. In Ireland his whole concern was for the Orange minority, his coercion for the majority, and in him every atrocity of the Greenwood regime found an eloquent defender. He made light of savage sentences, encouraged the informer, apologized for the Crown forces when they were guilty of pillage and murder. When Mr. MacSweeney, Lord Mayor of Cork, was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for the trivial offence of having a police code in his desk, and went on hunger strike as a protest, Mr. Lloyd George let him die, and shocked the world by his callous refusal

to set him free. Because Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, opposed conscription in Australia, Mr. Lloyd George refused to let him land in Ireland. Because Dr. Mannix loved Ireland and advocated her independence, he was treated as a criminal. At dead of night and in sight of Irish land he was forcibly removed to an English war vessel, and landed in England. And not only was he debarred from going to Ireland to see his aged mother, but he was debarred from visiting Liverpool or Manchester or Glasgow, because these cities contained hundreds of thousands of men of Irish blood. Like many nonconformists Mr. Lloyd George hated Catholics, and especially Irish Catholics, and was willing to treat them and their clergy with indignity.[1] Nor could a parallel be found to his Irish government since 1798. In their terrible indictment the Irish Bishops point to the raids and arrests at dead of night, to the prolonged imprisonment without trial, " the savage sentences from tribunals that command and deserve no respect ", the burning of houses, town-halls, factories and creameries, and crops, the destruction of industries by men maddened with plundered drink and bent on loot, the flogging and massacre of civilians. All these done by Crown forces had a parallel only in the horror of Turkish atrocities.[1]

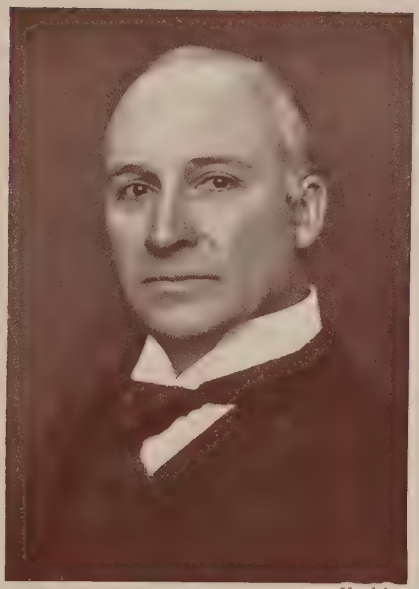
A commission sent by the English Labour Party to Ireland to investigate bore out the Bishops' indictment. The Black and Tans were intemperate, the Auxiliaries were brutal terrorists, and details were given of looting, burning, flogging, of murdering of men and insulting of women. And they add that " the blame for the present situation does not rest primarily with the Crown forces but with the Government".[2] Mr. Lloyd George had boasted that the Government had murder by the throat in Ireland, but General Thomson, a member of the Labour Commission, after what he saw in Ireland, was able to retort that the Government had murder by the hand.

Everywhere men marvelled that the British public allowed these horrors to continue. At home there was industrial unrest,

[1] Bishops' Declaration at Maynooth, Oct. 19, 1920.
[2] Report of Labour Party, Dec., 1920.

Vandyk

SIR NEVIL MACREADY



Vandyk

SIR HAMAR GREENWOOD

Vandyk

THE EARL OF YPRES
(LORD FRENCH)

Lafayette

BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER

strikes, high prices, intolerable taxation, hundreds of thousands, who had fought like heroes in the war, walking the streets without work or food or shelter. Abroad there were mad schemes of conquest from Cairo to Bagdad. Egypt and India were held down by military force. Nor would Russia be allowed self-determination. For Mr. Lloyd George's Government encouraged and subsidized a series of reactionary Russian adventurers who made war on the elected government of the Russian people. A loss of British prestige among foreign nations was the inevitable result. Australia, Canada, and South Africa were all in favour of justice to Ireland, and were disgusted when justice was not done.

In America De Valera and others had exposed the iniquity of the Treaty of Versailles and of the League of Nations Covenant, and when the Presidential election came in November, 1920, Mr. Wilson and his party were overwhelmed. Hitherto the Democrats had received the Irish vote; but their Chief had betrayed Ireland at Paris, and they were punished by exclusion from office. Irish influence in America was too powerful to be ignored, and it was quite certain that there could be no lasting friendship between England and the United States as long as Ireland was held down by force.

Yet England would give her nothing but savage coercion, the bullet of the Black and Tan, the lash of the Auxiliary, the looting of property, the burning of towns, the ferocious sentence of military courts, and in Parliament the lies of Sir Hamar Greenwood and the truculence of Mr. Lloyd George. General Smuts had declared that if the British Empire would not give self-government to Ireland, the British Empire would cease to be. But the Coalition Government in 1920 repealed the Home Rule Act of 1914, and replaced it by a measure for which not a single Irish member of Parliament voted; a measure which rent Ireland in two, and put the whole country under the domination of the Orangemen of Belfast.

CHAPTER XVI

The Greenwood Regime

When the Boer War was still in progress, Mr. Lloyd George asked in indignation: "What justice is there in punishing one man for offences committed by others over whom he has no control? How long will humanity stand this attack on women and children? How long will the civilized world tolerate it? If this war is prolonged and operations of this character continued, we shall not only suffer the shame of these transactions but may have to face the intervention of armed humanity." [1] Mr. Lloyd George spoke then as a liberty-loving Englishman, indignant at the repressive measures used against the Boers who were merely defending the freedom of their native land. Yet, such were the changes brought about in twenty years that he was himself in the year 1920 the head of a British Government which was employing similar measures of repression and cruelty against Irishmen, who, like the Boers, were merely fighting for their freedom.

In Ireland, the horrors done in the name of Government could not be published from the platform or in the press. All such meetings were proclaimed, and newspapers daring to tell what they knew would be instantly suppressed. British newspapers were either ashamed of what was being done, and maintained silence, or they were acting in the interests of the Coalition Government and refused to speak out. But American and Continental newspapers could not be censored, and their readers knew what the masses of the British people did not know. And Mr. Chesterton heard Americans, who were not unfriendly to

[1] Speech, Dec. 16, 1900.

England, ask in astonishment if the English people had gone mad. For while Ireland was held down by the throat, British public men talked much of self-determination and the freedom of small nations.

In Parliament, it seemed useless to protest. The overwhelming forces of the Coalition voted down every motion in favour of justice to Ireland, and listened with impatience to the recital of her wrongs. The charges made by Liberal or Labour or Irish members were laughed to scorn; and the Chief Secretary, refusing to believe anything against British troops or Irish officials, proclaimed that all the trouble was caused in Ireland by a murder gang, who, while attacking the Government forces, held in terror the masses of their own people.

Obviously there was need for an inquiry, for the charges and the denials could not be equally true, and in the end of October, it was moved in the House of Commons " That this House regrets the present state of lawlessness in Ireland and the lack of discipline in the armed forces of the Crown, resulting in the death or injury of innocent citizens and the destruction of property; and is of opinion that an independent inquiry should at once be instituted into the causes, nature and extent of reprisals on the part of those whose duty is the maintenance of law and order ".[1] The motion was rejected, law and order were not restored; indeed outrages became more common, and Ireland rapidly drifted into a state of anarchy.

In these circumstances, the British Labour Party appointed a commission from its own ranks to go to Ireland and personally investigate. Three of its members were in Parliament, Messrs. Henderson, Lawson and Lunn. Its executive was represented by Messrs. Cameron, Jowett and Bromley; General Thomson came as military adviser and Captain Kendal as legal adviser, while the Secretary of the Irish Labour Party, Mr. Johnson, also lent his assistance and accompanied the Commissioners. The Chief Secretary was courteous and readily furnished permits and introductions to responsible officers. In consequence, the

[1] *Hansard.*

military and police officers were everywhere courteous; but they would give away no official secrets nor furnish copies of any official reports. The Commissioners also had interviews with Cardinal Logue, the Archbishops of Dublin and Cashel, and other prominent men, both ecclesiastics and laymen; and they saw many Sinn Fein leaders including Mr. Griffith, whom they saw in Mountjoy Prison.

They wisely confined their inquiries to Dublin and its neighbourhood and to the Munster Counties, as these were the most disturbed areas and furnished most matter for inquiry. They could not, however, hold a public inquiry and hear evidence from the leaders of the Irish Republican Army. These leaders were on the run, and were considered outlaws by the Government, and as such fit only for the rifle bullet or the hangman's rope. But the Commissioners got readily in touch with the rank and file of the I.R.A. and with some of its leaders; and they saw with their own eyes the havoc that had been wrought over a wide area and the hardships inflicted on so many innocent and unoffending citizens.

They could not be said to be unduly biased on the Irish side, nor indeed had they much zeal for Irish freedom. Mr. Henderson was a Privy Councillor, a prominent colleague of Sir Edward Carson in the Coalition Government, and had readily acquiesced in denying Home Rule to Ireland in 1914 and in passing conscription for Ireland in 1918. Neither Mr. Lawson nor Mr. Lunn differed materially from his views, either in Parliament or outside it; and the record of the Labour Executive where Ireland was concerned was one of hypocrisy and betrayal. They were ready to strike against the export of munitions from Britain to Poland, so as to stop the war on Russia; but they were quite ready to make and transport munitions for the war on the Irish; and when the Irish railway workers struck work, rather than carry troops and arms destined for the slaughter of their countrymen, the British Labour Party left them to their fate. These Labour Leaders were quite ready to pass resolutions of sympathy with Ireland, but beyond this they were unwilling to go. Those who

came to Ireland were all English. Nor had they any desire to besmirch the name of their own country or blacken the character of British Government even in Ireland. It was this which made their testimony so valuable when given on the Irish side.

The result of their inquiries they tabulated under six heads—terrorism, arson, destruction of property, looting, cruelty to persons, and shooting. They found terrorism everywhere. The Black and Tans, swaggering, insolent, and intoxicated, strutted about with revolvers brandished, ready to insult or threaten. They drove through the country in motor-lorries with rifles at the ready, with searchlights and machine-guns, and with soldiers in tin hats as their armed companions. They trailed a Sinn Fein flag behind their car in the dust or they sang songs calculated to provoke Sinn Feiners. They entered shops and insulted the occupants, and frequently compelled the owners to remove their names from the shop fronts, if written in Irish. By day, the workman in the field, or the peaceful traveller on the road, lived in constant fear of these passing motor-lorries and the reckless men whom they carried; and at night, the peaceful citizen, always liable to fall under suspicion, dreaded to have his house burned, his doors and windows battered in, and himself carried away a prisoner, or perhaps murdered. The Chief Secretary described the Crown troops as brave men, fearlessly and proudly discharging their duties; and he denied with vehemence the charges made against them. But the Labour Commissioners had a different story to tell. They had " no desire to overstate the facts, but the atmosphere of terrorism which has been created and the provocative behaviour of armed servants of the Crown, quite apart from specific reprisals, are sufficient in themselves to arouse in our hearts feelings of the deepest horror and shame ".[1]

When the Commissioners came to deal with the destruction of property, they were shocked at the amount of havoc that had been done. Private houses, farm buildings, shops, factories, creameries, public buildings, and even whole streets and towns, had been at one time or other given to the flames. In April the

[1] Report, pp. 9–13.

creamery at Rearcross in Tipperary had been burned, and since then forty-one other creameries had been either wholly or partially destroyed. In a few cases, the damage done was slight; in other cases buildings or machinery or both were badly injured; in the remaining cases the destruction was complete, and neither buildings nor machinery remained. For the damage done to Newport Creamery the County Court judge awarded more than £12,000; for Garryspillane, £5420; for Upperchurch, nearly £9000. In other cases, the awards were much less; and there were cases where nothing was awarded and even where nothing was claimed.[1]

These creameries were worked on co-operative lines, and were situated mostly in Munster where the farmers keep many milch cows. They combined to establish creameries, setting up buildings and machinery, and found this the most profitable way to dispose of their butter and milk. When the creameries were destroyed, the whole countryside round shared in the loss; and this was the manifest intention of the Crown forces to whom the destruction was due. Policemen had been shot in the neighbourhood, or a barracks had been attacked, and as nobody could be made answerable, the Crown forces, unable to punish the guilty, resolved to revenge themselves on the community, so that the innocent as well as the guilty suffered. It was assumed that the mass of the people sympathized with the I.R.A., and with the attacks on the police, and the creamery was burned as a reprisal.

At first, the Chief Secretary was vehement in denial, protesting that there was not a tittle of evidence to prove that the servants of the Crown had destroyed these creameries. But he was in time compelled to change his attitude, and he admitted that both the Tubbercurry and Achonry Creameries " were burned on October 1st by members of the police force in an outburst of passion evoked by the brutal murder of District-Inspector Brady and the wounding of another of their comrades on the evening of the previous day ".[2] He would not so readily admit that Ballymote Creamery had also been burned by Crown forces. But the Labour Commissioners got possession of a telegram sent

[1] Report, pp. 90–8. [2] Report, p. 13.

by the District-Inspector at Sligo to the Head Constable at Ballaghaderreen ordering all available Auxiliaries "to proceed at once to Ballymote where a sergeant had been shot"; and when the Auxiliaries arrived at Ballymote, the creamery was already in ashes. The Commissioners think this much more than a coincidence.[1]

But, though the Government denied much and admitted little, they admitted that the Balbriggan hosiery works had been destroyed by Crown forces, following an attack on a police officer. And General Macready admitted that the burning of many houses in Tuam and its fine town hall was done by police who had got "out of hand", because two of their comrades had been shot dead on the road to Dunmore, several miles from Tuam.[2]

Generally speaking, however, Government officials were not willing to admit the guilt of their subordinates, and more than one suggested that creameries and factories and other buildings had been burned by the Sinn Feiners themselves. This seems an absurd contention. Men don't destroy their own property, and the Sinn Feiners were shareholders in the creameries and factories and owners of shops and dwellings destroyed. If the Sinn Feiners were the guilty persons, it would only show that the police and military had grossly neglected their duty. They were in possession of the streets, in strong force and well armed, and yet made no effort to save the property of peaceful citizens. The Labour Commissioners were not deceived and solemnly declared that "the forces of the Crown in Ireland have been guilty of arson, and that incendiarism is part of the policy of the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries, one of their methods of terrorism and revenge".[3]

Other methods of destruction the Commissioners saw as well as destruction by fire. "During our stay in Cork, certain homes and shops were entered by Auxiliaries, and shop-fittings, mirrors, furniture, pictures, ornaments, and crockery were wantonly

[1] Report, p. 15.
[2] Letter of General Macready to the Archbishop of Tuam.
[3] Report, pp. 20–3.

smashed. Members of the Commission visited these places and with their own eyes saw the havoc which had been wrought."

Nor did the Auxiliaries and Black and Tans hesitate to loot as well as burn. When shops were raided, the shop goods were taken as well as money. When creameries were attacked, butter and cheese were taken; and often men were stopped in the streets, first threatened or beaten and then robbed. Such accusations were indignantly repelled by the Chief Secretary, which need not excite surprise. But they were also denied, and with greater skill, by Mr. Denis Henry, an Irishman and a Catholic who, for place and Government favour, was glad to receive Orange cheers and to turn on the people of his own race and faith. " We were filled with shame," said the Commissioners, " that in the name of law and order servants of the British Government should be guilty of besmirching in the eyes of Ireland the honesty of the British people."[1]

The cases of physical violence and brutality that came under their notice were many. Men were kicked and beaten and flogged because they were Sinn Feiners, or suspected to be such. They were beaten because they refused to curse De Valera or spit on his picture. They were kicked and beaten because they were ex-soldiers, and, as such, suspected of teaching Sinn Feiners the use of arms. A man was thrown to the ground by Black and Tans and made to swear he would have nothing to do with Sinn Fein; and he was made to say " God bless the R.I.C." after he had been repeatedly beaten. Another man was repeatedly kicked because he did not answer questions he was really unable to answer. Then he was thrown into the river and his tormentors disappeared, satisfied that he was drowned. He survived, however, and his case was published in the newspapers. The following morning, masked and armed men rushed into his house and were disappointed at not finding him at home. But they seriously damaged his property, and left with his relatives the message that they were determined to get him, " and when we do, we

[1] Report, p. 26.

will guarantee that he will give no more evidence. We will make a clean job the next time."

Women, as well as men, were subjected to violence and brutality at the hands of the Crown forces; and the Commissioners add that rough and brutal treatment of women was by no means the worst that could be said of armed men in the service of the British Crown. " We could refer to more cases, but we believe that the reader of this report will agree with us that they suffice to show the infamous deeds which have been done in the name of the British people."[1]

In numerous cases persons were not merely ill-treated but deliberately shot dead. A father told the Commissioners that three men in the uniform of the R.I.C. entered his house one night, took out his son and deliberately shot him dead. Another man was taken out of his house and murdered. Two policemen, meeting a man at the corner of a street in a certain town, attacked him with their rifles, one wounding him fatally. Many men were wounded or killed in the hands of the Crown forces, the reason assigned being that the prisoner tried to escape.[2]

Worst of all was the massacre at Croke Park, Dublin, where a football match was being played on Sunday, November 21. Earlier in the day, fourteen British officers had been murdered in the city. Some of them, it was said, had a share in the torture of Kevin Barry at Mountjoy. Others had taken part in court-martials and awarded savage sentences. A few had been Secret Service men and had tracked Republicans to their doom. And if the officers' assailants had been captured and duly convicted and executed, nobody could have complained. But there was not a particle of evidence to connect those who killed the officers with anyone in the football field at Croke Park. Yet, as if in reprisal, the football field was surrounded by troops, and volley after volley was poured into the players and spectators by Auxiliaries and police. When the firing ceased, twelve lay dead and 144 wounded. Nor could the Commissioners, after careful inquiry, give any other verdict than that " Croke Park was a

[1] Report, pp. 26–9. [2] Report, pp. 29–31.

ghastly tragedy resulting from official errors of judgment and incompetence".[1]

Even these accumulated horrors did not attract so much attention as the burning of Cork on the night of 11th December. The city had suffered much during the year. Police had been shot in its streets, and in revenge, its Lord Mayor, Mr. MacCurtain, had been murdered. His successor, Mr. MacSweeney, had been prosecuted for having a copy of a police code in his possession, and had died a martyr in Brixton prison. In the city the Anti-Sinn Fein Society had its head-quarters, a mysterious body, working in the dark, looting and destroying property and terrorizing citizens, and recruited largely, if not entirely, from the worst elements in the R.I.C., the Auxiliaries, and the Black and Tans. Curfew was enforced in the city from 9.30 p.m., after which no citizens could be abroad. But, night or day, the relations between the Crown forces and the masses of the people were unfriendly; and Auxiliaries had been seen publicly whipping peaceable citizens through the streets and indulging in almost every form of brutality.[2]

On the 11th of December, an effort was made to burn the whole city. From nine o'clock, all through the night, the streets were held by armed and desperate men. Houses were broken into and looted, bombs were thrown through the broken windows and doors, or petrol sprinkled on them; drink was plentifully consumed, curses and yells and drunken revelry were mingled with the sounds of revolver and rifle shots; and when morning dawned little was left of Patrick Street, the finest business centre of the city. With these fine business houses had also disappeared the Public Library and the City Hall. All through the midnight hours, the sky was filled with smoke and flame. Nor would it be easy to see a sadder sight than the beautiful and prosperous city by the Lea stricken to the heart, its finest business houses and its finest public buildings only a mass of smouldering ruins.

Asked in Parliament if these atrocities were not the work of the Crown forces, the Chief Secretary vigorously repelled the

[1] Report, pp. 40–2, 72–4. [2] English Labour Report.

accusation. " I protest," he said, " against the suggestion without any evidence, that these fires were started by forces of the Crown." On the contrary, all the available soldiers and policemen were turned out to quench the fires, and help the fire brigade at their work. The fires, he believed, were the work of the Sinn Feiners. " It is obvious to anyone that a fire of this kind is the only possible argument against the Government's policy in Ireland."[1] Some soldiers had been attacked earlier in the night at Dillon's Cross, and had suffered some casualties, and the Chief Secretary and the newspapers which supported him maintained that the confederates of those who assailed the soldiers at Dillon's Cross burned Patrick Street and the City Hall.

This was an extraordinary statement, and if it were true, it would mean that the citizens of Cork had deliberately burned their own city and turned thousands of their kinsmen out of employment. The Lord Mayor repelled the insinuation as vile, and demanded an impartial inquiry. The British Labour Commissioners made a similar demand. The Cork Employers' Federation demanded an immediate and searching inquiry. The Cork Harbour Board and the Cork Chamber of Commerce, both bodies dominated by Conservatives, urged that an inquiry should be held and the truth ascertained. And the Unionist newspaper, *The Cork Constitution*, in its issue of December 16th, wrote that " the demand for a satisfactory inquiry is becoming irresistible, and should it not be forthcoming, the public will naturally draw conclusions by no means complimentary to the administration ". But the Chief Secretary would only grant a military inquiry. " It was the interest of the Government to find out who were the perpetrators of the outrage, and it would be done."

The Cork citizens, however, were not satisfied with an inquiry by the military into their own conduct, and the Irish Labour Party instituted an inquiry of their own. It was painstaking and thorough, though necessarily incomplete, and the facts it disclosed were not in accord with the statements made by Sir Hamar Greenwood. It was ascertained that on the night of the burning,

[1] *Hansard*, Dec. 13, 1920.

there was quarrelling and drunkenness among the Crown forces, resulting in several casualties; that 300 gallons of petrol had been taken out of Victoria Barracks; that men in Crown uniform, armed and drunk, were abroad during curfew, when no civilian could be abroad. There was evidence that soldiers and police had been seen looting the burning shops; that they refused their military appliances to extinguish the fire; that they turned off the water from the firemen's hose; that they cut the hose pipes. Not all, however, behaved so badly; for there were soldiers and police and even Auxiliaries who were ashamed of their comrades and who helped the people to save their property and their lives.

Some of the witnesses were professional men; some were firemen; one was an ex-officer of the British army; several were officers of the American navy who were in the city while the fires raged. More remarkable still was the testimony of an Auxiliary officer. " I am at present," he said, " only recovering from a severe chill contracted on Saturday night last during the burning and looting of Cork, in all of which I took, perforce, a reluctant part. We did it all right." " In all my life," said another, " and in all the tales of fiction I have read, I have never experienced such orgies of murder, arson and looting as I have witnessed during the past sixteen days with the R.I.C. and Auxiliaries. It baffles description. There are quite a number of decent fellows, and, believe me, a lot of ruffians."[1]

Sir Hamar Greenwood was quite satisfied that all these charges would be disproved by the military inquiry he set up, and in due time its findings would be published to enlighten a deceived public. But Balaam was quite expected to curse and in reality blessed; and General Strickland, who conducted the inquiry, would not, no more than Balaam, speak what he knew to be false. He was an honest soldier, unaccustomed to the tortuous ways of politicians. He had no sympathy with Sinn Feiners, and no tenderness for them when he took them in arms. Nor did he, nor indeed could he, in the circumstances, hold an exhaustive inquiry. But his verdict was evidently not what was

[1] Irish Labour Report, p. 58.

looked for in Government circles. Had he pronounced Sinn Fein guilty of the burning of Cork, and had he exonerated the Crown forces, everyone knew that his report would have been quickly published. But it was not published then and has never been published since; and the fact that it was not published, convinced even Government supporters that the Crown forces were guilty, and that the preposterous statement of the Chief Secretary that the Cork Sinn Feiners had burnt their own city was a preposterous statement and nothing more.[1]

No doubt Sir Hamar Greenwood had no zeal for liberty and not much regard for truth; nor could he have carried out the Irish policy of the Coalition Government if he had. If the Irish were not allowed to govern themselves; if the whole nation, outside of the Orangemen of Belfast, were to be considered outlaws, their demand for freedom scorned, their County Councillors and Members of Parliament public enemies, their national assembly an illegal body, their young men fighting for liberty nothing more than a murder gang, then Sir Hamar Greenwood was a suitable Chief Secretary, and Auxiliaries and Black and Tans and drunken policemen were suitable instruments of his regime. Their business was to strike terror, to break the spirit of the people, to cow them into slavish submission even while hating British law. The Chief Secretary who employed such instruments could not be surprised if they murdered and looted and burned. Nor could he do otherwise than make excuses for them and defend them when charges were preferred against them in Parliament.

But there were Englishmen who loved Ireland just as little as Sir Hamar Greenwood did, but who loved England more, and who were ashamed of what was being done in Ireland. Lord Hugh Cecil was one of these. He disliked unauthorized reprisals, but had no objection if they were done under Government sanction. He proposed that the use of motor-cars should be prohibited except to Government officials. He would restrict travelling by train, and allow no one to travel without a pass

[1] Irish Labour Report.

from the proper Government authorities. He would arrest everyone in disturbed districts suspected of sedition. Even those not arrested in such districts he would collectively punish by measures designed in an increasing degree to hinder trade and industry and impoverish the whole population. The ordinary Irish citizen should be taught, if necessary by being brought to grave economic distress, that it is his business to detect murderers and bring them to justice[1]. Since the days of Lord Burleigh the Cecils had no love for Ireland, and Lord Hugh's inherited instincts were not unworthy of his ancestors.

His views were held by many and ultimately found some favour with the Government. In December, an order was issued against the use of motor-cars by private individuals. Those adjudged to be loyal subjects got Government permits, but even these could not travel beyond twenty miles from their homes. Priests and doctors engaged on the business of their calling enjoyed a certain amount of immunity, though in some cases, if they were known to be active Sinn Feiners, permits were refused. But traders in the towns suffered grievous loss, and in many cases were brought to the verge of ruin. Wholesale internments also took place. Dail Eireann, the national assembly of elected representatives, was declared illegal and could not meet except by stealth. County and district councillors were thrown into internment camps. Young men, known to be active Sinn Feiners, if not shot down " trying to escape ", or interned, were " on the run ", that is hiding from the Crown forces and liable to be shot by them at sight.

At first, four counties of Munster and then the whole province, as well as Kilkenny and King's Counties, were put under martial law. All Crown forces, soldiers, Auxiliaries, Black and Tans, and R.I.C. were, by this measure, placed under General Strickland and responsible to him. The obnoxious Auxiliaries were removed from Cork, and the change to military rule was undoubtedly an improvement. But the powers conferred on military commanders were extraordinary, and were unsparingly used.

[1] *The Times*, Oct. 2, 1920.

There were no Coroners' Courts; only a military inquiry under which the guilt of murder could be brought home. Civil courts ceased to function. The using, or even the carrying of arms, was declared an offence punishable by death; and for these offences several men were shot to death in the barrack-square at Cork.

Official reprisals began, appropriately enough, on New Year's Day. "As a result of the ambush and attack on the police at Middleton and the Glebe House, it was decided by the military governor that certain houses in the vicinity of the outrages were to be destroyed, as the inhabitants were bound to have known of the ambush and attack, and that they neglected to give any information either to the military or police authorities."[1] Seven homes were then destroyed, the occupants of which had nothing to do with the ambush, and no knowledge of it, and who were thus punished without being guilty. Middleton was only the beginning, and as the months of the new year passed, there were many such reprisals throughout Munster. If the I.R.A. attacked a police patrol or a lorry of soldiers as they careered along, and especially if there were casualties, the officer in command decreed the destruction of the neighbouring houses, and beggared their owners, regardless of their innocence or guilt.

Placed under military authority it was expected that the Auxiliaries would become amenable to discipline. But it is easier to loose the winds than to chain them, and the Auxiliaries had powerful friends who shielded them from harm. Nor did anything show this more clearly than the statement of an Auxiliary officer, changed from Cork to Dunmanway. "General Higginson arrived here this morning to have a straight talk to us about discipline, as he put it. I am afraid we struck terror into him, for the straight talk never materialized. He was most amiable."[2]

Worse still was what happened outside of the martial law area at Trim. A body of Auxiliaries stationed there had taken

[1] Official Military Report. [2] Irish Labour Report, p. 58.

valuable property from a Protestant family, and taken the property by force. Some of it was found by the Company Commander, Major Wake. He was a man of honour and a gallant officer who wanted these Auxiliaries punished. For no other apparent reason he was called on to resign, and as he refused to resign he was dismissed. But Major Wake's superior, General Crozier, was also a man of honour, and as the Auxiliaries in question refused to account for their conduct, he dispensed with their services to the number of twenty-six. This action was approved by General Tudor, who was in supreme command. But here the powerful friends of the Auxiliaries intervened. The accused men went to London and pleaded before General Tudor and the Chief Secretary at the Irish Office, with the result that they were reinstated and directed to return to Ireland and await investigations. General Crozier then resigned his valuable position worth £1200 a year, a big sacrifice for a poor man.

It could not be said that he had any sympathy with an Irish Republic, or that he was disloyal to the British Empire. He was an Ulster Protestant, the son of the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, and had served with distinction in South Africa, Ashanti, Zululand, and Canada, and for his services had won many distinctions. His sympathies were with Sir Edward Carson and the Ulster Volunteers, and in the Great War he had served with the Ulster Division. As a poor man it ill suited him to sacrifice a position worth £1200 a year. But he was disgusted with the work set him to do in Ireland; and after his resignation, being free to speak, he had many of these charges to make against the agents of the Government in Ireland. He knew that Auxiliaries had dressed up as I.R.A. soldiers and robbed a post office in Kilkenny; that they had ill-treated prisoners; murdered Father Griffin, the Mayor of Limerick, and others; and he had no doubt about the looting at Trim [1]. He described the regime then in Ireland as one of "murder, arson, and robbery", and wound up one of his letters by saying, "I have had experience of the

[1] *Daily News*, May 24, 1921.

Russian regime in Russia. I little thought to see it operating in Ireland."[1]

These grave charges, made by a distinguished British General, should not have been made if they were untrue, and should not have been allowed to pass unchallenged; and from many quarters came a demand for an impartial inquiry. But Sir Hamar Greenwood, though ready enough to deny, would grant no inquiry and the Auxiliaries and Black and Tans must not be controlled.

In Limerick, the Mayor and ex-Mayor were murdered at dead of night, when the curfew was in force and no civilian could be abroad. At Castleconnell, a party of sixty Black and Tans attacked policemen in plain clothes, in a hotel, mistaking them for Sinn Feiners. An English visitor, Dr. Cripps, a Tory in politics, described them as resembling demented Red Indians. They were drunk, and fired at random, and when they ceased firing, the hotel was shot to pieces and the proprietor and two policemen were dead. These facts were not contradicted and were brought before the House of Lords by the brother of Dr. Cripps, Lord Parmoor, an English Tory peer.[2]

In Cork, men were executed for possessing a revolver. In Dublin, not being under martial law, they were hanged. In Limerick, a distinguished Englishwoman, Mrs. Lawrence, was sick with what she saw. "All day long, from nurses, priests, doctors, and other public servants, one tragedy after another is poured into one's ear until the heart is sick."

It was all done to break the spirit of the people, and yet in spite of the worst that was done, the spirit of the people remained unbroken. They would give no evidence before the military courts, and had no respect for these Courts' decisions. Instead of regarding condemned men as criminals, the people regarded them as heroes and martyrs; and when four young men were hanged in Dublin for levying war against the Crown, a crowd of 20,000 flocked to Mountjoy Prison to pray for their departing souls. In the bleak March morning, the rosary was recited and

[1] *Daily News*, May 14, 1921. [2] House of Lords, April 26, 1921.

hymns sung and the young men executed were at once placed on the catalogue of Irish martyrs beside Kevin Barry and Terence MacSweeney of Cork.

Whatever was the character of the Auxiliaries they were certainly brave men. They counted cheaply their own lives and the lives of their opponents, and the wonder is that they did not strike terror into the hearts of the I.R.A. But they failed. Such was the perfection of the Republican Intelligence Department that the inmost secrets of Dublin Castle were discovered. Before the Auxiliaries reached the houses to be raided, arms and ammunition were removed, and leaders like Michael Collins and Richard Mulcahy, so much sought for, were gone. In Dublin, bombs were secretly manufactured, and as the police and military lorries passed through the streets, they were assailed, even in midday, by bomb and revolver and rifle, and often suffered heavy casualties. The daring and resourceful Republicans even entered Mountjoy Prison and set some of the prisoners free. Mails were taken from the post-office vans in the streets of Dublin, and in broad daylight. Thus were the plans of the Government discovered and frustrated; and if the mail bags told that someone had betrayed the people's cause, the traitor was marked for destruction and shot down.

In the country districts the roads were cut and the bridges broken down to impede the rapid march of the military lorries. The overturned vehicles were often destroyed and the occupants shot or captured, and often the captured machine-guns of the Crown forces did deadly execution in their enemy's hands. All over Munster the Auxiliaries and police went abroad in deadly peril. A sheltering hedge, an old ruined building, or some friendly rocks, might be the lurking place of their foes, and a volley of rifle fire the first intimation that the enemy was at hand. The R.I.C. won the praises of high Government officials and of prominent politicians for the zeal with which they hunted down their own countrymen. They were the eyes and ears of the Auxiliaries and the Black and Tans, pointing out persons to be captured and houses to be destroyed. But they

won the hatred and scorn of the Sinn Feiners in arms, and whoever expected mercy from them, there was none for the R.I.C.

The wholesale arrests and the outlawing of the young men of Munster increased rather than diminished the number of the gunmen. Not being able to remain in their own houses, they took to the hills and mountains, and organized themselves into armed bands. The people, regarding them as their defenders, fed them and cared for them when sick or wounded. There was no one to spy upon their movements, and whoever did was promptly discovered, court martialled and shot. To the ranks of these flying columns were attracted the adventurous and daring; and often the sons of Protestant loyalists, whose property the Crown forces had wantonly destroyed, were the most active. Out on the hills or in the lonely valleys, these young men on the run drilled and learned the use of arms. They were abstemious and clean-living, believing that they were soldiers of freedom. They were brave and fearless, as Irish soldiers always are, and as the months passed, their confidence increased, as indeed it might, for they had become perhaps the most expert guerilla soldiers in the world. They had their losses, but they inflicted heavy losses on their opponents. They captured arms and ammunition, destroyed police barracks, raided post offices, executed spies, and when the military destroyed the houses of Sinn Feiners who lived near the scenes of ambushes, the Sinn Feiners retorted by destroying the property of rich Unionists who were known to be in sympathy with the policy of the Government. And thus, while the Sinn Feiners suffered, so also did the friends of the Government.

It was hoped by the Government that the disturbances would be confined to Munster and that in that area peace and submission would soon be secured. This hope was falsified. Munster not only remained unconquered, but the area of disturbance was gradually extended, and by the month of May roads were cut, post offices were raided, spies executed and policemen shot in almost every county in Ireland.

There was a terrible picture of the state of Ireland in the

month of March in the pages of a great English journal. "The Black and Tan and Auxiliary force have been given a free hand in Ireland during the last twelve months. What is this force? The Chief Secretary has given a return which supplies some interesting information. In the R.I.C. there have been 2197 resignations, 226 dismissals, 19 court martials, 16 in which the finding was against the accused. In the Auxiliary Division there have been 131 resignations, 33 dismissals, 15 court martial cases, 8 cases in which the finding has been against the accused. To appreciate these figures, let us take a parallel. The London Metropolitan Force contains sixteen times as many men as the Auxiliary Division which Sir Hamar Greenwood regards as the cream of his force. Out of this Auxiliary Division, 41 men have been dismissed or convicted by court martial. If we multiply 41 by 16 we get 656. Supposing it was announced that it had been found necessary to dismiss or punish 656 London constables in twelve months, what would be thought of the force? The largest number dismissed in any one year between 1910 and 1918 was 35.

"But the situation is much worse than these figures suggest. Sir Hamar Greenwood told the House of Commons that he had been unable to find out who was responsible for the burning and murders at Balbriggan; and that the thirteen cadets who watched one of their men murder two men did nothing worthy of punishment. This then is the character of the force that is let loose on the Irish people."

In the beginning of 1921, there was anarchy throughout Ireland and martial law in Munster. In May, an Oxford undergraduate who visited Tipperary described the condition of things as one of unrelieved horror. "Everywhere is the Terror. Men go to bed at night in fear of what the night will bring and awake to a day of which they may never see the close. Anyone's home is liable to be entered at any time by either, that is by the Crown forces or by the I.R.A., and without trial or warning the owner may be dragged from his bed and shot."[1] The months since the

[1] *Review of Reviews*, May, 1921.

new year opened had brought no peace and no settlement, and no security either of property or life; indeed only fresh horror had come with the flight of time.

While the country that he loved so well was thus stretched on the rack, William Joseph Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, passed to his reward. He died on the 9th April in his eighty-first year. Educated in Dublin and at Maynooth, his academic record was one of unequalled brilliance. And the promise of his boyhood was amply fulfilled in his maturer years. He was a Professor at Maynooth at twenty-six, and President before he had reached his fortieth year; and when the See of Dublin became vacant, his reputation was so great that his appointment as archbishop was regarded as inevitable. All his lifetime he was a student. He read everything and he remembered everything. He was a good musician, a sound lawyer, an authority on theology and canon law. He wrote a Grammar of Music, a tract on bi-metallism, and one of the best expositions of the intricate Land Act of 1881. Such varied and extensive knowledge recalls the great Irish ecclesiastics of the past.

But Dr. Walsh was no mere dry-as-dust poring over books. He was deeply interested in the public questions of the day, and, unlike his predecessor, Cardinal M'Cabe, was always in sympathy with popular claims. In educational matters he struck many a hard blow on the Catholic side. He was a Commissioner of National Education, a Commissioner of Intermediate Education, a Senator of the Royal University, and the first Chancellor of the National University. He had an accurate knowledge of the Irish land system, and had much to do with the struggle for land reform. He was a strong supporter of Parnell's policy, and helped more than any other man to expose the forgeries of Pigott and the base conspiracy of *The Times*.

He was greatly saddened at Parnell's fall, and disheartened with the years of discord that followed. But he supported the Irish Party under Dillon and Redmond until the Party had become inefficient and corrupt, a mere appanage of the Liberal Party. Then he withdrew his support; and though he preferred

constitutional action to physical force, his sympathies were turned to Sinn Fein. One of his last public acts was to plead for the life of the heroic boy, Kevin Barry. But he pleaded in vain, and as the shades of night were closing round him his heart was heavy at the scenes he witnessed in his native city. The harassed people always looked to him as their father and their champion, and great was their sorrow when the greatest successor of St. Laurence O'Toole was laid to rest in Glasnevin.

CHAPTER XVII

The End of Coercion

The curious combination of Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Carson defeated Home Rule in 1914, and spoiled any chance even of temporary peace in 1916 and the following year. With the advent of Lord French the mask was thrown off and henceforth Ireland was ruled by force. Yet, while Sinn Feiners were imprisoned on mere suspicion, and denounced as a murder gang, there was an uneasy feeling that other measures ought to be tried. The name of England was tarnished; her professions of zeal for the rights of the weaker nations were regarded as insincere; and in the councils of the nations her position was weakened. In America especially she lost ground, nor could she hope to recover the ground lost until she gave Ireland a government founded on the consent of the governed.

This Mr. Lloyd George undertook to do in 1919 when he set up a Cabinet Committee to make out a scheme for the better government of Ireland. The Home Rule Act of 1914 would not do; it pleased neither North nor South, neither Nationalist nor Sinn Feiner. In spite of the sweeping victory of the latter at the poll, Mr. Lloyd George maintained that they did not represent Ireland. Their demands were impossible; but moderate opinion would be satisfied with a measure which would at the same time secure that neither the Empire would be dismembered nor would Ulster be coerced, while the majority of Nationalists would have full powers of governing themselves in all their domestic concerns.

This measure, the Government of Ireland Bill, was introduced in 1920, and after much delay was finally passed into law. The delay was not caused by any prolonged discussion of the various

clauses, or any interest in the whole measure. On the contrary, the Bill was spurned by the few Nationalist members of Parliament; it was not welcomed by the Orangemen; and both the Liberal and Labour members refused even to discuss it. Even Sir Edward Carson, though believed to be its author, was ashamed of it; and though he discussed its clauses, and grew angry with the Nationalists for not trying to amend it, he declared it was not wanted in Ulster, and that the Government should have maintained the Union. Ministers took little interest in the progress of the Bill through its various stages. Even the Chief Secretary was usually absent; and Mr. Devlin declared that the only clause of importance in Ministers' eyes was the last one which provided that "the Government of Ireland Act, 1914, is hereby repealed as from the passing of this Act".

To create confusion in Ireland, where there was enough of confusion already, was evidently the object of its authors. In defiance of history and nature, Ireland was divided into Northern and Southern Ireland. Included in the twenty-six counties of Southern Ireland were Donegal, the most Northern county of Ireland; and included in Northern Ireland were Fermanagh and Tyrone, both Home Rule Counties, and both abhorring a union with such Orange counties as Antrim and Down. There might be some reason for having a separate Parliament for Ulster, a separate province, and in such a Parliament the Nationalists would be a powerful minority. And there might be some reason for giving a separate Parliament to the four Orange counties, because they would have nothing to do with the Catholics or their Parliament. But the arrangement made was the worst possible to conceive.

Nor were the powers of these two Parliaments such as to entitle them to the name of Parliament. The list of things they could not do was a long one; the list of things they could do was short. They were debarred from any power in such questions as the Crown, the regency, peace or war, the army, navy, air force, treaties, pensions, dignities, titles, foreign trade, submarine cables, coinage, aerial navigation, legal tender, trade marks. They could

be still over-ruled by the Imperial Parliament, and have their Acts annulled by it. They could have no police force for three years. Nor could they have any power over the Post Office; nor over such matters as land purchase, stamps, registration of deeds. Nor could they interfere with Trinity College or with the Freemasons' Society.

Worst of all were the financial provisions. The Parliaments had no power over customs or excise, or income tax; nor could they impose a tax on capital. Nor could they collect their taxes or appoint or dismiss officials; and though their powers were so limited, they must pay the Imperial Exchequer a sum of £18,000,000 a year. Of this sum, £10,000,000 would be paid by Southern Ireland, and £8,000,000 by the six Ulster counties. From time to time, the contribution and the share of each would be revised by an Exchequer Board consisting of five members, two being appointed by the British Treasury, one by Northern Ireland, one by Southern Ireland, with a chairman appointed by the King, which meant the British Ministry. This left the whole power in the hands of British Treasury officials, and would be certain to favour Northern at the expense of Southern Ireland.

It is true that the Bill expressed a hope that, at some future time, the two Parliaments might join into one Parliament for all Ireland; and then extended powers of taxation might be expected. But, to make this more difficult, no union could take place until an absolute majority of the Ulster Parliament demanded it; and, as the Orangemen declared they would never coalesce with a Dublin Parliament, a union could never come. There would be Protestant ascendancy in six Ulster counties, and the Southern Unionists without representation in a Dublin Parliament. Meantime there would be a duplication of administrative departments in Belfast, the expense of a national Government thrown on six counties. The law courts would be broken up, with a Chief Justice on the north and another on the south of the Boyne; and an Irishman of the twenty-six southern counties would be a stranger and an alien in the land of the Maguires and the O'Neills. As for the council which was set up for all Ireland

as a connecting link between the two Parliaments, it was a mere debating society with no real power and no capacity to bring North and South together. The Act was not and could not be intended to bring peace. It was rather intended to foster racial and sectarian differences, and accentuate and perpetuate the discord which already prevailed.

Yet this was the Act which was described by Sir Hamar Greenwood, through a document circulated by the Government, as conferring great powers to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Ireland, and as leaving, with only certain excluded matters, the whole field of legislation within the power of the two Irish Parliaments. The Act went far beyond Grattan's Parliament. Much was made of the fact that religious disabilities were removed by it, so that at last an Irish Catholic could be Lord Lieutenant. Sir Hamar Greenwood was sure that, within six months of the passing of the Act, there would be two Irish Parliaments peacefully performing the work of well conducted legislative bodies. But even he had his doubts. For provision was made in the Act for a refusal to function; and if Southern Ireland would not set up its Parliament, it would be given Crown Colony Government. " It will, therefore, be for Irishmen themselves to decide in the near future whether they will themselves take up the reins of Government in their own country, or be ruled by the Government of the United Kingdom under a system of government analogous to Crown Colony Government."[1]

But if Sir Hamar Greenwood thought that the Act, which was called in Ireland the Plunder and Partition Act, would bring peace to a distracted land, and redound to the credit of England, Mr. Lloyd George had no such illusions. He complained that the Irish members would not even discuss the Bill, that it was open to large amendment, that he was ready at any time to meet representative Irishmen and discuss with them the whole question of Irish Government. Repeatedly the Government of Ireland Bill was postponed, until at last it was thought that the Government had no desire for its passage into law. And even while it was

[1] Sir Hamar Greenwood.

thus intermittently and perfunctorily discussed, Mr. Lloyd George was engaged in negotiations outside of Parliament for an Irish peace.

The spokesman on the Irish side was Dr. Clune, Archbishop of Perth, Australia. He was an Irishman and a member of the Redemptionist order; and the fact that he had served as chaplain in the war, and was known to be friendly to British Imperialistic designs, recommended him to the British Premier. At the Premier's request, Dr. Clune, who had been in Ireland, postponed his departure for his distant See, and in the last days of 1920 he had several conferences with Mr. Lloyd George in London. In accordance with his usual custom, the Premier put little in writing. But he authorized the Archbishop to see Mr. Griffith and others then in prison, and was willing to enter into a truce with them without asking the Republican soldiers to lay down their arms. When active hostilities ceased, he would grant such terms as went far beyond the Government of Ireland Bill; indeed, would give Ireland full control over her domestic affairs. On this basis, the Irish leaders were willing to agree to a truce and negotiate for a peace, and the prospect was that the new year would open on a peaceful Ireland.

Just then, however, the Galway County Council, or rather six of its members posing as the whole Council, passed a resolution asking for a truce and for peace. A Sinn Fein M.P., Mr. Sweetman, wrote a public letter also advocating peace. And Father O'Flanagan, the Vice-President of Sinn Fein, apparently without consulting anybody, followed the lead of Mr. Sweetman and went to London to negotiate with Mr. Lloyd George. All this was unfortunate. There was a War Party in the British Cabinet led by Sir Hamar Greenwood and Mr. Churchill, who protested that Ireland could easily be conquered if only sufficient vigour were shown against the Republicans. These Ministers interpreted the Galway Resolution as a sign of weakness on the Irish side. A little more strengthening of the army in Ireland, a little more vigour on the part of its chiefs, and Irish resistance would be overcome. Then the beaten Irish would accept the

Government of Ireland Bill as part of a dictated peace. Dr. Clune believed that the Premier wanted peace, and the Irish leaders were not unreasonable. But Mr. Lloyd George allowed himself to accept the militant view; the negotiations were broken off; Dr. Clune returned to his diocese, disappointed and disheartened, and the war was renewed in 1921 in an intensified form.

During the next few months horror was piled upon horror. Houses were burned down as official military reprisals. The Mayor of Limerick was murdered by Crown forces. And General Crozier resigned because of the looting by men under his command. Nor did the Catholic bishops exaggerate when they denounced in their Lenten Pastorals the Government for having innocent men shot at sight, for shooting others because they were supposed to be trying to escape, for having raided convents and murdered priests. It was a formidable indictment, and it could scarcely be denied when so staunch a Tory as Lord Robert Cecil declared in the House of Commons that, in consequence of the character of Irish repression England's influence abroad was suffering " in spite of all that Sir Hamar Greenwood had said ". The heads of the Protestant Churches in England were as convinced as Lord Robert Cecil that the policy of repression in Ireland was wrong, and that Government reprisals were shocking public opinion throughout the world. And the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales in their general assembly followed the lead of the other Protestant churches. As Welshmen they were reluctant to censure Mr. Lloyd George, but their consciences were touched at the horrors that were being done in the name of a civilized government.

But the Premier remained unmoved. He would only give the Irish peace when they had first surrendered their arms; in other words, he would only give them a dictated peace. He told the religious leaders of England that the Crown forces were not half so black as they had been painted, and that where individuals had erred, they had been promptly punished. The Sinn Feiners were murderers and had been dealt with as such. They were " a rebel organization which is based on a repudiation of con-

stitutional action in favour of violence, and achieving its ends by the deliberate and calculated murder of the members of a police force, 99 per cent of whom were Irish and 82 per cent of whom were Catholic ". He warned the Methodists that they were going beyond their province in discussing political questions, and advised them to devote themselves to such questions as temperance and the instruction of public opinion throughout the world. He would allow no Irish Republic and no severance of Ireland from England, and declared that the Empire had no alternative but " to defend her position by the use of armed forces ".

In spite of the fact that neither Orangemen nor Republicans wanted the Government of Ireland Bill, he had it passed into law, and professed to believe that in time it would solve the Irish difficulty. " I believe that the struggle is over and its bitterness forgotten, and unity has been preserved. All classes will agree, including a majority in Ireland itself that in fundamentals the Government were right and Sinn Fein wrong." (Reply to the Religious Leaders of England, April 19, 1921.) These were bold words and could not be reconciled with the intensified warfare in Ireland, the ambushes, reprisals and counter reprisals, the lootings and burnings, the fillings of prison and internment camps.

In the next month elections were held for the Northern and Southern Parliaments. In spite of much intimidation, a substantial minority were returned for the six Northern Counties, all pledged never to sit in the Belfast Parliament. In the other twenty-six counties, the Republicans swept the field. There was not even a contest, and of 128 members returned only the four for Trinity College were attached to England. The remaining 124 were Republicans, all pledged not to enter any British-made Parliament, but to enter Dail Eireann. In such circumstances, it was provided by the Government of Ireland Act that the twenty-six counties were to have Crown Colony Government. This was the state of things in June when the King came to open the Northern Parliament in Belfast. Lord French had then left

Ireland and was succeeded by the Catholic Lord FitzAlan. Sir Edward Carson, turned into Lord Carson, had become a Lord of Appeal in England, and was succeeded as Orange leader by Sir James Craig; and Republican Ireland, it was said, would soon be brought to obedience by aeroplanes and internment camps and a blockade of Irish ports.

Behind the scenes, however, the British Premier was thinking of fresh negotiations for peace. In April, with his full approval, Lord Derby came to Dublin and had a conference with Mr. De Valera, who had returned to Ireland from America a few months earlier. In May, the new Ulster leader, Sir James Craig, also saw Mr. De Valera with a view to bringing North and South together. Nothing, however, was done until the opening of the Belfast Parliament in June, and then a better prospect of peace was ushered in. If *The Times* is to be believed, and its sources of information are usually good, the credit of the change belongs chiefly to the King. As a constitutional monarch he cannot mix in political controversy; but he cannot be denied the right to hold opinions on public questions, nor to make these known to his Ministers, if he thinks it is for the interest of his world-wide Empire. It was well known that he desired peace in Ireland and that he detested the alternative to an Irish peace being the wholesale slaughter of his Irish subjects, and that he had not hesitated to say so to his Prime Minister. Peace with Ireland was also made easier by the removal to the House of Lords of Sir Edward Carson, and by the resignation of Mr. Bonar Law an Imperial statesman with the crabbed outlook of a thorough reactionary, and the instincts of an Ulster Orangeman. It was also helpful that Mr. Law's successor as Unionist leader was Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was quite convinced that coercion in Ireland had failed and that the time for conciliation had come.

Thus was the way prepared for the King's appeal at Belfast. "Most certainly," he said, "there is no wish nearer my own heart than that every man of Irish birth, whatever be his creed and wherever be his home, should work in loyal co-operation with the free communities on which the British Empire is based. I

speak from a full heart when I pray that my coming to Ireland may prove to-day to be the first step towards an end of strife among her people, whatever their race or creed. In that hope, I appeal to all Irishmen to stretch out the hand of forbearance and conciliation, to forgive and forget, and to join in making for the land which they love, a new era of peace and contentment and goodwill." This moving appeal was met with a cordial welcome south of the Boyne, as well as in Ulster, and in the hope that it might be followed by happy results, Mr. Lloyd George issued an invitation both to Sir James Craig and to Mr. De Valera. It was as follows:

" Sir,

" The British Government are deeply anxious that, so far as they can assure it, the King's appeal for reconciliation in Ireland shall not have been made in vain. Rather than allow yet another opportunity of settlement in Ireland to be cast aside, they feel it incumbent upon them to make a final appeal, in the spirit of the King's words, for a conference between themselves and the representatives of Southern and Northern Ireland.

" I write therefore to convey the following invitation to you as the chosen leader of the great majority in Southern Ireland, and to Sir James Craig, the Premier of Northern Ireland. (1) That you should attend a conference here in London in company with Sir James Craig, to explore to the utmost the possibility of a settlement. (2) That you should bring with you for the purpose any colleagues whom you may select. The Government will, of course, give a safe conduct to all who may be chosen to participate in the conference.

" We make this invitation with a firm desire to end the ruinous conflict which has for centuries divided Ireland and embittered the relations of the peoples of these two islands who ought to live in neighbourly harmony with each other, and whose co-operation would mean so much, not only to the Empire but to humanity.

" We wish that no endeavour should be lacking on our part

to realize the King's prayer, and we ask you to meet us, as we will meet you, in the spirit of conciliation for which His Majesty appealed.

"(Signed) D. Lloyd George."

The Orange newspaper of Belfast and the *Morning Post* in England confessed themselves shocked at the proposal to confer with murderers. But the British Press was almost unanimous in approval, and Sir James Craig at once accepted the Premier's invitation to go to London. Mr. De Valera's attitude was different. As the leader of an Irish minority, Sir James Craig was not his equal, and he would meet him only in Ireland. And he wished him to come to Dublin, an invitation which he declined. Mr. De Valera at the same time invited other representative Irishmen, such as Lord Midleton, Mr. Jameson, Sir M. Dockrell, and Sir Robert Woods, M.P. for Trinity College; and after several conferences with them, it was agreed that Mr. De Valera himself should proceed to London. He was ready, he informed the Premier, to "meet and discuss with you on what basis such a conference as that proposed can reasonably hope to achieve the object desired". To smooth the path of negotiations, a truce was also declared, and at 12 o'clock on July 11th, hostilities ceased all over Ireland.

After Mr. De Valera had been on several occasions in conference with the Premier, he returned to Ireland. He was unable to get such concessions as would be acceptable in Ireland, though the proposals of the Government went far beyond the provisions of the Government of Ireland Act, and were at least worthy of being discussed by the Irish representatives. For this purpose, the members of the Dail were released from prison. An exception, however, was made in the case of Commandant M'Keown of Ballinalee who was under sentence of death in Mountjoy Prison. Like so many others he had been in arms and in one encounter lives had been lost, and it was for this he had been court martialled and sentenced. His ability as an officer and his chivalry towards those who had fallen into his hands extorted the admira-

Vandyk

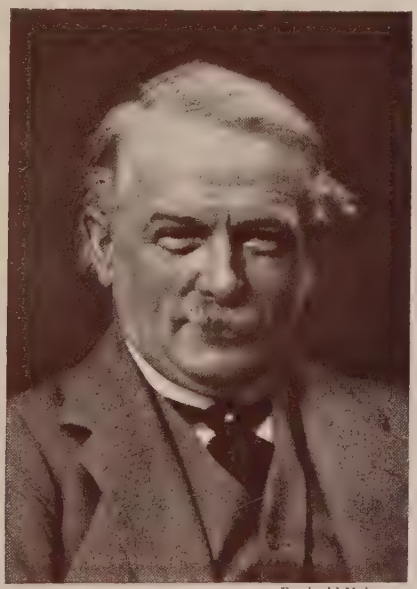
LORD BIRKENHEAD

Elliott & Fry

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN

Vandyk

WINSTON CHURCHILL



Reginald Haines

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

tion even of his foes, and the speech he made from the dock was worthy of the highest type of Irish patriot. To except such a man from pardon, and to send him to his doom while his colleagues were assembled in Dublin to talk of peace terms, would not help the cause of peace. And Mr. De Valera rightly interpreted the wish of public opinion when he declined to proceed further with peace negotiations unless Mr. M'Keown was set free. In these circumstances Mr. Lloyd George overruled his subordinates, and the gallant officer received pardon and freedom and was present with the other Deputies at the Mansion House when the offer of the British Cabinet was being considered.

Its terms were at least worthy of serious consideration. Southern Ireland would get by treaty full fiscal autonomy, its own police and army and law courts, and post office; in a word, would get all the powers of a self-governing dominion. As such she would have the protection from external attack of the whole strength of the British navy. There were, however, some clogging conditions. The British navy alone would guard the Irish coasts, and for that purpose the use of Irish harbours and naval bases should be given. There should also be facilities given for defence and communications by air. There must be no protective tariffs against Great Britain or any part of Ireland itself; nor must Great Britain be prohibited from recruiting in Ireland for her army; and Ireland must take over her share of the British National Debt. Finally, these terms were only for twenty-six counties. Ulster must not be coerced, and there was nothing to prevent the excluded six counties from getting Dominion status and thus stereotyping partition.

Mr. De Valera had no doubt as to the answer he should give after he had consulted his Cabinet, and none when he addressed Dail Eireann and declared bluntly, "We can't accept these terms". He claimed for Ireland the right of determining its own destiny, which involved complete independence. She would then be Britain's friend, ready to give facilities to her navy and air force for safeguarding their mutual interests. She would take her share of the National Debt, the amount to be determined by arbitration,

with the President of the United States as umpire. As to Dominion status, he did not say what his answer would be had it been offered. But he maintained it had not been offered, as Canada and Australia had the right to secede if they wished, and Ireland was given no such right. Nor were the concessions offered to an undivided Ireland, but to two broken fragments of Ireland.

As if to spoil all chances of peace, Sir James Craig declared that Ulster was satisfied with what she had got, and would have nothing to do with Southern Ireland. General Smuts, who was then in London, and had come to Dublin to see Mr. De Valera, advised the latter to accept the terms offered, believing that in time Ulster would be compelled to come in. Mr. Lloyd George hoped that reason would prevail even over logic and that the Irish leaders would not renew a conflict " which would be robbed of all glory and of all gratitude by its overshadowing calamity ".[1]

The outlook was then dark. But Mr. De Valera did not close the door on further negotiation, and the British Premier was not averse to explain the terms offered, and meet any objections made against them on the ground that they did not confer Dominion status. A great difficulty was that there were extremists in England who hated to give anything to the Sinn Feiners; and there were extremists in Ireland, especially in Munster and amongst the women, who believed that the I.R.A. had beaten the British army and would again beat the army, and who therefore shouted into Mr. De Valera's ears that there must be no surrender. The moderates, however, greatly outnumbered the extremists on both sides of the Irish Sea, and Mr. De Valera must try to arrive at a settlement, unless public opinion was to be set at defiance. It was not, however, easy to find a common formula which would be acceptable to both sides as a basis of negotiation. Mr. De Valera suggested " government by consent of the governed "; but Mr. Lloyd George, it was plain, did not attach the same meaning to the formula as the Irish leaders, and had to complain that the cause of peace was not advanced by the continued exchange of argumentative notes.

[1] Speech in the House of Commons, Aug. 19, 1921.

Indeed the public had become weary of these notes, and early in September Mr. Lloyd George wrote from Inverness, where he was spending a short vacation, inviting the Irish leader or his representatives to a conference at Inverness on the 20th of September. " His Majesty's Government," he said, " must ask for a definite reply as to whether you are prepared to enter a conference to ascertain how the association of Ireland with the community of nations known as the British Empire can best be reconciled with Irish national aspirations." This was an elastic formula, and evidently meant as such. But Mr. De Valera must have independence and a Republic, and insisted on making this clear. Ireland was an independent sovereign state, and it was only as the representative of such he could attend the conference at Inverness. Mr. Lloyd George's reply was prompt and emphatic. He could not recognize Ireland as an independent state, and accordingly the invitation to Inverness was cancelled and a deadlock was reached.

Mr. Lloyd George's difficulty was that to recognize Ireland's representatives as those of an independent state would be a recognition of Ireland's independence, and this he would not do, either in conference or outside. Mr. De Valera, however, did not claim any such recognition in advance, and he suggested a conference unfettered by conditions. Ultimately, this was agreed to in substance, and in the last days of September, Mr. Lloyd George sent a fresh invitation to a conference. It would be held in London on the 11th of October, " When we can meet your delegates as spokesmen of the people whom you represent, with a view to ascertain how the association of Ireland with the community of nations known as the British Empire may best be reconciled with Irish national aspirations ". This invitation was promptly accepted by Mr. De Valera; delegates were appointed and the conference was opened at 10 Downing Street on the date named.

The delegates on the Irish side were Messrs Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Duggan, Gavan Duffy, and Barton, with Messrs. Childers, Charteris, F. Lynch, and O'Hegarty as secretaries.

Those on the English side were Messrs. Lloyd George, Churchill and Chamberlain, Sir Gordon Hewart, Sir Hamar Greenwood, Sir W. Evans, and the Lord Chancellor, Lord Birkenhead.

Mr. Griffith, founder of Sinn Fein, was a man of great ability, clear-headed, determined, unemotional, on whom the blandishments of Mr. Lloyd George would be entirely thrown away. Mr. Collins had not the literary ability, nor knowledge of public questions of Mr. Griffith, and was a much younger man. But he had already acquired fame, and was indeed the legendary hero of the Irish war. As Chief of the Irish Intelligence Department his risks were great, his hairbreadth escapes many. But he eluded those who strove hard to run him to earth, and who by capturing him would have earned a great Government reward. With infinite resource and daring he went everywhere and found out what he wanted to know, and in discovering Government secrets was able to anticipate opponents and thwart their plans. He was Minister of Finance in the Republican Government, and if it be added that he was quick to see a point, resourceful, persuasive and genial, with plenty of Irish wit, it may be granted that he was a good selection for the conference at Downing Street. Mr. Duggan was a lawyer, honest and brave. Mr. Duffy, the son of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, was also a lawyer, who had lived abroad and was a good linguist. Mr. Barton was a landlord, formerly a Conservative, and a British officer. Mr. Childers was English and so was Mr. Charteris, both highly educated men; and Mr. Lynch and Mr. O'Hegarty were good Irishmen intent on doing their best for Ireland.

The delegates on the British side were not those whom the Irish people would have selected if a choice had been given them. Mr. Lloyd George's Irish record could hardly have been worse. Mr. Churchill had proved thoroughly unreliable on the question of Home Rule. Lord Birkenhead had once been Galloper Smith, a noted figure in Carson's rebel army. Sir Gordon Hewart and Sir Worthington Evans were not known to be friendly to Irish claims. Lastly, Sir Hamar Greenwood's selection was an unhappy

one, for in Ireland he was the most hated Chief Secretary since Lord Castlereagh.

Yet this strangely assorted assembly, with such discordant views on the matter discussed in conference, were soon on friendly terms and all went well until the Pope sent a telegram to George V hoping that Irish peace would soon come. " We rejoice," he said, " at the resumption of the Anglo-Irish negotiations and pray to the Lord with all our heart that He may bless them, and grant to your Majesty the great joy of bringing to an end the age-long dissension." The King thanked His Holiness, sharing his hopes and wishes that peace would come. But Mr. De Valera, who missed no opportunity of posing as the head of a nation that had already declared itself free, felt aggrieved at being overlooked and telegraphed to the Pope as the head of the Irish Republic, " The Irish people owed no allegiance to the British King. They had formally declared their independence, and were ready to die in defence of national freedom."

The distrust of British statesmen was so profound and the knowledge that British intrigue at the Vatican was ever active caused many in Ireland to applaud Mr. De Valera. On the other hand, a mere declaration of Ireland's independence by its chosen representatives did not make Ireland free, and if Mr. De Valera's claim was for complete independence, he should not have agreed to a conference at which Irish independence was emphatically ruled out by the British Premier. For the moment, Irish delegates in London were grievously embarrassed; the reactionaries in Great Britain were encouraged; and the London Conference was brought to a standstill.

Behind the scenes, however, there were explanations which brought the deadlock to an end. The conference resumed its work, and in the last days of November the welcome news was published that an agreement had been reached. Nothing was required but the assent of Sir James Craig to give it immediate effect. The bare thought that the Sinn Feiners were to get freedom or that Orange ascendancy was not to be maintained had already roused the ire of reactionary politicians inside and outside Parlia-

ment. But in Westminster they could only muster forty-three members in a House of nearly five hundred; and at a great convention of Government supporters at Liverpool, their rout was equally decisive. The vast majority in Great Britain wanted peace, and while ready to give freedom to Sinn Feiners, were getting impatient with the extraordinary demands of Ulster bigotry.

It was hoped that all parties would be pleased when the terms of the agreement between the British and Irish representatives were known. Under its provisions, the Ulster Orangemen would retain their six-county Parliament if they wished, and with the powers given in the preceding year. But there would, in addition, be an All-Ireland Parliament with the full powers of a self-governing dominion; with complete fiscal autonomy, its own law courts and police and territorial force, and free of all outside interference in matters of trade and commerce. Ulster must not be coerced, for to this Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues were deeply pledged. But they were anxious that these pledges should be forgotten, and that Belfast, in the interests of the Empire, would be tolerant and yielding. Their hopes were vain. Sir James Craig was only a pompous mediocrity proud of being Premier, and so anxious to keep the position that he made himself the mouthpiece of the Belfast mob. He would enter no All-Ireland Parliament, he distrusted the men of the South and West, and adopted as his reason for the rejection of the agreed proposals, the only reason given by an ignorant shipyard worker, "We won't have Home Rule".[1]

In these circumstances, nothing was left to the London Conference but to turn to an alternative plan of settlement and this was done in the next few days. The task of reconciling clashing interests was difficult. North-east Ulster had been given a Parliament for six counties, but more than a third of this area was in sympathy with the South and West and would have nothing to do with Belfast. The Irish delegates wanted independence and were unwilling to take an oath of allegiance to the English King; but the British delegates could not concede independence,

[1] Public Speeches.

Topical

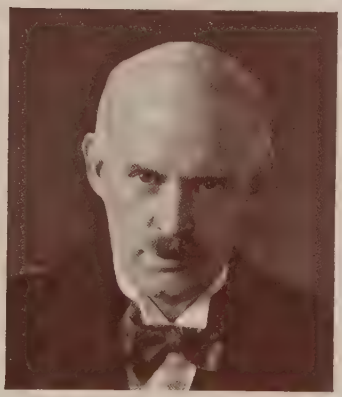
ERSKINE CHILDERS

Lafayette

ROBERT BARTON

Lafayette

DIARMUID O'HEGARTY

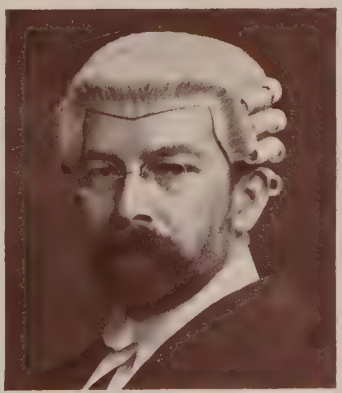


Lafayette

EDMOND DUGGAN

Topical

MICHAEL COLLINS



Lafayette

G. GAVAN DUFFY

which would mean separation, and they could not dispense Irishmen from allegiance to the head of the Empire to which they belonged. The British delegates wanted to have aerodromes and an army in Ireland; but the Irish objected to both. Nor would they be satisfied with less than full fiscal autonomy. Finally, the British delegates wanted no trade restrictions in the British Isles; but the Irish delegates could not conceive their country invested with Dominion status without the power of imposing tariffs suited to the country's needs. Such a power, they knew, could be used with effect against the obstinate bigotry of Belfast.

Round these hotly disputed questions Homeric battles were fought. Long sessions were held in the day and were prolonged far into the night. Nor was it until near three o'clock on the morning of the 6th of December that the worn-out press reporters, watching wearily through the night, were told the good news that the long struggle was over, and that a treaty of peace had been signed.

Under its provisions, Ireland, under the name of the Irish Free State, was invested with full Dominion status, her position being in relation to the Imperial Parliament and Government the same as that of Canada; " and the law practice and constitutional usage governing the relationship of the Crown, or the representative of the Crown and of the Imperial Parliament to the Dominion of Canada shall govern their relationship to the Irish Free State ". This gave Ireland her own army, police and judicature, her civil service in all its departments, complete fiscal autonomy and freedom of external and internal trade. Nor was any oath of allegiance exacted from Irish members except " faith and allegiance to the constitution of the Irish Free State ", and an oath of fidelity to the British King " in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations ". The Irish Free State would take up her share of the National Debt, but would have a counterclaim by reason of overtaxation in the past. She would give certain harbours to the British navy, and would compensate all Govern-

ment officials deposed from office and would at no time endow any religion, or impose any disabilities by reason of any religious belief.

The six counties of North-east Ulster were included in the Irish Free State, but were not to lose the Parliament at Belfast, with all the powers conferred on it in the previous year. This Parliament might, in addition, vote its territory out of the Irish Free State within a month after the ratification of the Treaty had received statutory sanction, but if it did so, a boundary commission would soon be set up "to determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, so far as may be compatible with economic and geographical conditions, the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland, and for the purposes of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and of this instrument the boundary of Northern Ireland shall be such as may be determined by such commission".

This was to meet the case of Fermanagh and Tyrone, South Armagh, South and East Down and Derry City, where Catholics and Nationalists were in the majority. And these Catholics and Nationalists wanted to be joined to their co-religionists of the South and West, and would on no account submit to the Orange ascendancy of Belfast. Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Birkenhead had given Home Rule to North-east Ulster, because Ulster must not be coerced by the rest of Ireland. Now they declared that Fermanagh and Tyrone had an equal right not to be coerced by Orange Ulster. Hence the Boundary Commission would sit to rectify the statutory injustice of the previous year.

This Treaty was signed by all the delegates, British and Irish. It was to be ratified by both London and Dublin Parliaments, and little doubt was felt either in Great Britain or in Ireland that ratification would follow in due course, and that the Irish Free State would begin the work of Irish Government early in the coming year. So sudden and happy a change was welcomed on all sides, and the prospect of a happy Christmas and a bright New Year brought comfort to many a sad Irish home in these dark December days.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Treaty of Peace

When the Home Rule Bill of 1914 passed through all its stages, there were rejoicings in Ireland. But when the Treaty of December, 1921, was signed, there were none. It went far beyond the poor measure of 1914, and this was widely and gratefully recognized. But the leaders wished that there should be no public manifestations of satisfaction, no bonfires or fervid orations. The people obeyed, believing that the leaders were wise in restraining their exuberance. Had there been undue jubilation British Ministers might have said that the Irish would have willingly accepted much less generous terms; and these Ministers might have been tempted to curtail and whittle down when the details of the Treaty, with legislative sanction, were cast into their final form.

Nor did it excite undue surprise among large masses of the people when Mr. De Valera declared that the Treaty did not give national freedom. They gave him credit for diplomacy and statesmanship, and it was thought that he spoke with an eye on the British Parliament, where the Treaty must necessarily be ratified. There was, however, no difficulty at Westminster. In the House of Commons, the majority for ratification was enormous. Even in the House of Lords, it was three to one. Unyielding and illiberal still, Lord Carson opposed ratification and almost wept at the humiliation of England. But his old friend, Lord Birkenhead, the Galloper Smith of other days, answered him back with contumely and scorn; described his statesmanship as worthy of a hysterical schoolgirl; and thought the opponents of the Treaty

no better than mediævalists, men who remained stationary while centuries passed them by.

The ship had thus safely weathered the storm in London, but in Dublin it had a stormier passage. It was stipulated by the eighteenth Article that the Treaty should be submitted by the Irish signatories " to a meeting summoned for the purpose of the members elected to sit in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland, and if approved shall be ratified by the necessary legislation ". There was a difficulty here. The members of Dail Eireann from the twenty-six counties were the same as the members for Southern Ireland, and had been elected for both positions at the same time, and by the same franchise; but they had hitherto sat as members of Dail Eireann and had refused to sit in the so-called Southern Parliament. If, however, Dail Eireann met and approved of the Treaty, it would be a matter of course that they would, for the time being, sit as members of the Southern Parliament, and as such repeat the approval given in Dail Eireann.

This procedure was followed, and on the 14th of December, the Deputies of Dail Eireann met in full strength in one of the large Lecture Halls of University College, Dublin, Mr. John MacNeill being in the chair. The rumours afloat as to serious cleavage were then seen to be well founded; and the cleavage was not only among the leaders but also among the general body of the Deputies. Mr. De Valera's position was peculiar. He was President of the Republic and Prime Minister and claimed, and indeed exercised, similar power to those claimed and exercised by the President of the United States. He regarded his ministers as being on a much lower level than his own. They were appointed by him alone, and could be dismissed by him at will. He gave each of his delegates to London authority to negotiate and conclude a peace; but he claimed that this was modified at a later stage by the addition of a proviso, that the final draft of any agreement arrived at in London should first be submitted to him and approved by him before it was signed. He harped much on this, and complained that the delegates had gone beyond their instructions, though they had not exceeded their powers. The

nation, enfeebled by its long agony and longing for peace, grew impatient with such fine distinctions, and there was a general feeling of relief when the public sessions of the Dail gave place to private sessions where the Deputies resolved to fight out their differences in secret. Nor did these sessions end for four weary days.

Mr. Griffith, as the chairman of the Irish signatories, moved that the Treaty should be approved. It did not give us everything, he said, and it certainly did not give us an Irish Republic. But he reminded his audience that the delegates in London had made no demand for an Irish Republic. If they had, the conference would have at once ended; for the British Premier had made it quite plain that he would have no negotiations on such a basis. But short of an independent Republic they had got full freedom. They had got national recognition as a Free State, entitled to make terms by Treaty with the British Empire. They had got the evacuation of British troops, and instead their own army and police and their own national flag. And they had got the British Premier's assurance that all British troops would be withdrawn the moment the Treaty was ratified.

Under its provisions, Ireland could frame her own constitution in harmony with her wants and ideals. She would have her own system of finance, her judicial system, power to make commercial treaties with all nations outside her shores. If there was a Governor-General appointed by the British Government, he would be but a figure-head and could only be appointed with the concurrence of Irish Ministers. Nor could he impede the course of legislation or executive authority, no more than the British King in Great Britain. The Treaty gave Ireland a status such as she had never enjoyed since Strongbow landed on her shore. The vast majority of the people were satisfied with it and thought it ought to be approved by the people's representatives, unless they were to reject the principle of government with the consent of the governed.

This motion was seconded in a few short, simple sentences by the gallant soldier, John M'Keown. He was satisfied the

Treaty gave the substance of freedom, and he had no desire to pursue shadows when the substance was within his reach. The same thought was put in a powerful speech by Mr. Collins, who declared that " if we choose to risk substance for sentiment, we may be left with nothing but sentiment ". He reminded his hearers, and it seemed necessary to remind some of them, that the Irish delegates were not in the position of conquerors dictating peace to a vanquished foe. Others laid emphasis on the fact that the only alternative to the Treaty was war; not the war of the Black and Tans, but a war waged by a mighty empire, ending inevitably in complete subjugation and a dictated peace.

Such war Mr. De Valera was ready to face. The Treaty, he said, did not realize Irish national aspirations, and the association of Ireland with the community of nations known as the British Empire brought no peace because it brought no independence It abolished the Irish Republic and conceded fidelity to the British King. It was signed under duress and therefore was a vitiated contract which could not bind. He protested he did not want war—he was a man of peace. Yet he vehemently proclaimed that, rather than subscribe to such a treaty " he would go into slavery until the Almighty God blotted out their tyrants ". Though the differences between opposing speakers were fundamental, there was an agreeable absence of personalities or passionate reproaches. Nor did Mr. De Valera himself make any personal attack, and was quite ready to give credit for honesty to his opponents.

But he gave no evidence in these debates of superior debating power, no capacity for practical politics. He was vague and visionary and refused to grapple with hard facts. Fault might be found with the financial part of the Treaty, because, if impartial arbitrators were not appointed, Ireland might be burdened with an undue share of the National Debt. But on this matter Mr. De Valera was silent, and in fact in such an arrangement he was willing to acquiesce. Nor did he find fault with partition, as he had himself already expressed his willingness to leave the six counties to Sir James Craig, and had not even

stipulated for a boundary commission which might at least reduce the area subject to Orange ascendancy. His objection was mainly to the oath, and to the inclusion of Ireland within the British Empire. His alternative proposal was that Ireland should be externally associated with the British Empire; and his suggested oath was one of " faith and allegiance to the constitution of Ireland and the British Commonwealth of nations and to recognize the King of Great Britain as head of the association ". The Treaty oath only prescribed faith and allegiance to the constitution of the Irish Free State and " fidelity to King George in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations ".

There did not seem much difference between these two oaths of allegiance, and some newspapers and public men declared that the difference was one between tweedledum and tweedledee. Nor was it clear how Ireland, externally associated with the British Empire, but hampered by its Treaty obligations, would be in a better position than an Irish Free State, guarded from attack by a powerful empire, but free as any British Dominion to work out its destiny in accordance with the will of its own people. Mr. Childers was at pains to show that even dominion status was not conferred, and expended much learning and ingenuity to prove his case. But his arguments were met by the Treaty supporters, and his conclusions shown to be unsound. With Ireland externally associated, Mr. De Valera could still be President De Valera, and no doubt this weighed much with him. This point, however, was not made by Mr. De Valera's opponents. They treated him with great tenderness, and were reluctant to show that he was willing to sacrifice his country to his ambition.

After the second day the heavier guns had gone off in the debate; but the speeches nevertheless went on. One spoke for the Treaty, another against, both covering the same ground and neither saying anything new. The country grew impatient with representatives who forgot that the nation was in peril. One of

them told a newspaper correspondent that " the people in favour of the Treaty are normal people dealing with realities. Very many of those who have spoken against it appear to me to be less concerned with the fortunes and future of Ireland than with the figure they themselves will cut in history. And some members who are for rejecting the Treaty are hoping and praying it may pass." (*Catholic Herald*, Dec. 24, 1921.) With Ireland harassed by Sir Hamar Greenwood, no care was taken at the elections to select proper men, and now, in the crisis of her fate, Ireland had too many Deputies, ignorant, ill-informed and vain, with no sense of responsibility and no idea of real patriotism.

The flood of repetition and irrelevance still flowed with undiminished volume as Christmas approached, and it was necessary to postpone the decision until the New Year. And when the New Year came and the debate was resumed, there were more speeches, until it would seem as if every Deputy felt it his duty to make a speech. Some spoke briefly, merely repeating what others had already said. The Deputies dwelt on their personal wrongs, and complaint was made that there was too much rattling of the bones of the dead. Most of those opposing the Treaty admitted that they were flouting the wishes of their constituents, and, in doing so, seemed in no way ashamed. One only of them resigned; others, though repeatedly called upon, refused to resign. Miss MacSweeney of Cork spoke for nearly three hours; but a Deputy from Tipperary contented himself with saying that he would vote against the Treaty and damn the consequences; he said no more.

On the seventh day of the debate, Mr. De Valera announced his intention of resigning his position as President of Dail Eireann. All his ministers must at the same time resign, for such was the arrangement. Then Mr. De Valera would stand again for election, and if successful would rid himself of such obnoxious persons as Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins and replace them by men who would be subservient to his will. " If," he said, " I am to keep the chief executive authority here in the Republic, I cannot be handicapped. I cannot have responsibility without the right

to use all the resources of the State to defend itself and its existence." This, of course, would involve the destruction of the Treaty; and when Mr. De Valera was re-elected with his new Cabinet, he would offer the British Empire his new proposals. Both Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins objected to this procedure, which the latter scornfully described as Tammany Hall tactics. It put a new issue before Dail Eireann; and they maintained that the first question to be settled was the approval or disapproval of the Treaty. Until this was settled, Mr. De Valera had no right to raise personal and irrelevant issues. The Speaker agreed and the debate went on, and by mutual consent was to finish on the following day.

Meantime the gravity of the crisis began to be felt by the most shallow and irresponsible of the Deputies. There was no provision in the Treaty for an appeal to the people, and if the Treaty was rejected, the British Government was absolved from its obligations; and the Irish Republic would attempt to govern and war would immediately begin. A few of the more reasonable of the Deputies on both sides had already taken counsel, hoping to bring about reconciliation and unanimity. After several meetings had been held, substantial agreement was reached. But Mr. De Valera would have his own way, and treated the peacemakers with scant courtesy; and when the last day of the debate was reached, little was left but to divide. Though the public was thoroughly wearied, they had to endure twenty additional speeches. There was a sensible and manly little speech from Mr. Ward of Donegal, and many others that were neither sensible nor reasonable. Nor were there any flashes of wit or humour, no burst of eloquence; nothing but the same monotonous iteration, the old constant treading and re-treading the same narrow patch of ground. Some disliked the Treaty but knew that their constituents wanted it; and these Deputies considered it to be their duty to represent their constituents' wishes. Others openly defied their constituents and gloried in their defiance.

One of Mr. De Valera's personal friends, Mr. Boland, it was

clear, followed his chief through personal loyalty. He had just returned from America, and he made the significant admission that American opinion was all for the Treaty. In spite of this, he was for rejection, though he was not offensive, and keenly felt his parting with old colleagues. Of an entirely different character was the outburst of Mr. Cathal Brugha, Minister of Defence in Mr. De Valera's Cabinet, a determined little man who had shown some capacity for guerilla warfare. He was evidently jealous of Mr. Collins, and of the fame which he had acquired, and Mr. Collins he covered with coarse abuse. His speech was long and in disagreeable contrast with other speeches. It was personal throughout, bitter, rancorous and vulgar; the speech of a factionist in which not a gleam of vision or statesmanship could be found.

Far above such a vulgar diatribe was the closing speech of Mr. Griffith. It was the speech of a patriot and a statesman. With all his years of service to Ireland, he claimed no credit for what he had done. For abuse he cared nothing; his only desire was to serve Ireland and this he claimed to have done when he signed the Treaty. He had not gone to London for a Republic. If he had, the conference would soon have been over, for the British would have no conference on these terms. He had, however, put forward Mr. De Valera's proposal of external association with the British Empire. He had put it forward three times, and each time it had been rejected. Even if it had been conceded, it would not have been an Independent Republic but a Republic associated with the British Empire in peace and war, in treaties and in defence. And the recognition of the British King as head of the association, what was it but common citizenship, and what advantage did it confer which was not secured by the Treaty? He denied that he was elected to get a Republic, either at the General Election of 1918, or in that of 1921. In 1918 he was elected to put out the worthless Irish Party; and in 1921 as a protest against the rule of the Black and Tans. Unlike so many others, he acknowledged himself to be the servant of the people, not their master, and he knew they wanted the Treaty and did not want war. If the Treaty was rejected, he wanted to know

what was the alternative, whither would the people go, where, as another Deputy, Mr. Mulcahy, put it, would they find rest for the soles of their feet? It was idle to talk of Ireland having already a Republic. It was but a paper Republic, hampered by superior force at every turn and entirely unable to govern.

The division was taken at night, and to the relief of the waiting crowd outside and of the people throughout the country, sixty-four voted for the Treaty and fifty-seven on the other side. Then there was a painful scene. Mr. De Valera rose to say that it would be his duty to resign his office as chief of the executive, and was proceeding to say something more, but was so overcome by emotion that he broke down and was unable to proceed. The Deputies then left the University Hall and silence reigned where the war of words had lasted so long.

From the struggle of these days Mr. De Valera emerged with a reputation grievously damaged. On the narrow stage provided by the rebellion of Easter Week he had shown courage and resource, and both in prison and outside he exhibited qualities for leadership. His attractive personal character heightened the effect produced by the fact that he had been sentenced to death because he fought for Ireland. His escape from prison, his going to America and secret return, in spite of so many spies, caused him to be regarded as a sort of legendary hero. His attack on the League of Nations, it was believed, contributed to the defeat of the hated President Wilson, and his defiance of the equally hated Lloyd George brought him additional esteem among his own people. Those who knew him well declared that he was thinking only of Ireland; and they predicted that when Ireland had secured her freedom, he would gladly retire from political life, happy in some University lecture hall and still happier in scholarly seclusion with his books. To confirm this view, he declared in the Dail debates that he was sick of politics, and was determined, no matter what happened, to retire from public life. For himself and for Ireland, it would have been well had he done so, and if he had, his place would be an honoured one among the great men of the world.

In the Dail debates his best friends were gravely disappointed. He was petulant and peevish, arrogant and overbearing, impatient of interruption or even of friendly suggestion, and throughout showed neither statesmanship nor debating power. He found fault with Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins, though they had done more than the labours of Hercules. He wanted external association with the British Empire, and his own formula for an oath, though he could not show how such an arrangement would be better than that of the Treaty. Nor had he any hesitation about going to war, none about deluging his country in blood, with the certainty of ultimate defeat. The man who was willing to wait for Irish freedom until the Almighty blotted out the British Empire was certainly an unsafe and even dangerous guide. And the man who prolonged the Dail debates, leaving forty Irishmen under sentence of death and hundreds in English prisons to spend their Christmas there, was thinking much more of himself than of his countrymen. For it was arranged that until the Treaty was ratified these prisoners were not to go free. In spite of his professed unselfishness, he was unwilling to efface himself for his country's good. He wanted to be President of the Irish Republic, even of one which surrendered six counties to Orange Belfast, and was bound to England in peace and war. In the disastrous year of 1890, Parnell would not vacate the chair of the Irish Party, even for three months, though he knew that his obstinacy meant the defeat of Home Rule. Nor would Mr. De Valera in 1922 cease to pursue a phantom republic though he knew it would probably mean the ruin of Ireland.

After the Treaty had been approved, not one of the majority sounded a note of triumph; and both Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins appealed to Mr. De Valera to co-operate in working the Treaty for the good of Ireland. They wanted his help to get the British out of Ireland. But he would only promise that he would give them no opposition; and so little sincere was he in this that he resigned the Presidency and then offered himself for re-election, his declared object being to defeat the Treaty. Nor would he accept defeat at a General Election as final, as

he maintained that the people did not know what they were doing. Fortunately for Ireland, a majority of the Dail were unwilling to acquiesce in these arrogant pretensions. Mr. De Valera was deposed and was replaced by Mr. Griffith, while a Provisional Government was also formed with Mr. Collins at its head.

The position was peculiar and to a stranger would be difficult to understand. Mr. Griffith was President of Dail Eireann, with ministers pledged to continue the Republic until the Free State was in being. Mr. De Valera, though no longer President of the Republic, was still President of the Sinn Fein organization which was pledged to sustain the Republic. The army and police were the I.R.A. controlled by Mr. Griffith and immediately under Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Griffith's Minister of Defence. Finally, Mr. Collins owed his position as head of the Provisional Government to the Southern Ireland Parliament, with which Mr. De Valera and his supporters would have nothing to do. And though he declared he would not hamper Mr. Griffith or Mr. Collins, he told them if they attempted to subvert the Republic, the I.R.A. would refuse to obey them. It was quite clear that he had no sympathy with Mr. Griffith endeavouring to maintain the Republic until Mr. Collins had merged the Provisional Government in the Irish Free State.

Criticized and condemned where he might have expected confidence and co-operation, Mr. Collins took up his heavy burden and in a short time did much. The prisoners in Irish internment camps had been set free before Christmas. Those in Irish and English prisons were set free immediately after the ratification of the Treaty; and among these were forty under sentence of death. The evacuation of British troops was next taken in hand, and within a few days, the last of the hated Auxiliaries had left Dun Laoghaire. The regular soldiers were also sent to the ports as fast as they could be sent by road and train, and within a fortnight considerable forces had left Ireland. Then came the Black and Tans, who had left such an evil memory, and finally the old Royal Irish Constabulary vacated their barracks.

Meantime Dublin Castle had hauled down its foreign flag,

and on the 17th of January was handed over by the Viceroy to Mr. Collins. The official statement on the British side was "In the Council Chamber at Dublin Castle this afternoon, his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant received Mr. Michael Collins as head of the Provisional Government, provided for in Article 17 of the Treaty of December 6th. Mr. Collins handed to the Lord-Lieutenant a copy of the Treaty in which the acceptance of its provisions by himself and his colleagues had been endorsed. The other members of the Provisional Government were then introduced.

"The Lord-Lieutenant congratulated Mr. Collins and his colleagues and informed them that they were now duly installed as the Provisional Government, and that in conformity with Article 17 of the Treaty, he would at once communicate with the British Government in order that the necessary steps might be taken for the transfer to the Provisional Government of the powers and machinery requisite for the discharge of its duties.

"He wished them every success in the task they had undertaken and expressed the earnest hope that under their auspices the ideal of a happy, free and prosperous Ireland would be attained."

This bald statement describes not so much a change as a revolution. Every atrocity that could be perpetrated under the name of government has been seen in Ireland; every oppressive act of a nation strong and ruthless towards a nation weak and helpless has been done by England; and the worst that England had plotted and planned had been done within the shelter of Dublin Castle. Situated in the capital of Ireland, the centre of Irish Government, no Irishman was welcome within its walls but the renegade and the traitor. No Irishman was honoured there who was not willing to cover his country with dishonour. For the Irish patriot it had fetters and a halter, the dark dungeon, the torture-chamber and the scaffold; and not once but often was the head of an Irish chief the grim ornament on the Castle gates. The passing centuries brought no change to the dwellers within, who resolutely closed their ears to the voice of reform

outside. They looked with approval on the horrors of the penal laws; laughed when millions fell under the stroke of famine; heeded not the widow's or the orphan's cry; favoured the evicting landlord; promoted the perjurer and the informer; and prescribed for Ireland's ills the workhouse and the emigrant ship.

The fall of such a place was the fall of the Bastille. Mr. Collins, in his short official statement, announced the surrender of Dublin Castle to the Provisional Government, and, happily, it was a bloodless surrender. Thousands came to witness the historic event, and joy filled their hearts when they saw the Auxiliaries march out from the Castle gates and the British flag disappear from the Birmingham Tower, where it had so long fluttered as the symbol of an alien power.

The members followed the fate of the head, and in a short time the various Government departments were ruled by Irish ministers. The revenue departments were taken in charge by Mr. Collins himself. Local government was given to Mr. Cosgrave, and his inspectors were sent without delay to supervise the work of poor relief and the care of bridges and roads. The Minister of Education, in taking over his Department, told the Commissioners of National Education that their services were no longer required, except in an advisory capacity. As the British soldiers marched out of their barracks, I.R.A. soldiers marched in; and every effort was to be made to recruit and train both an army and a police force. As for the magistrates and judges, they were to continue to discharge their duties until further notice. In the meantime, there were to be no new appointments made in the courts and no alteration either in pay or duties of existing officers.

In the work before them, Mr. Collins and Mr. Griffith wanted the assistance of the best talent that Ireland could give. A new order had to be built up on the ruins of the old. Much of the old system would have to be cast aside as useless. There were offices where there was waste and corruption, officials who had lived in luxury and ease and hated work, and who either in work or in idleness were out of sympathy with the people. A native police force must be formed, an army enrolled and armed; the bench

must cease to be the reward of bigotry and political partisanship; local government must be brought into touch with local needs; the Irish language and Irish history must get a place of honour in schools where Irish character was formed. Much was to be done in the post office and on the railways. There were rivers to be deepened and waste lands to be reclaimed, mines to be opened, manufactures to be encouraged, lands to be divided among landless men. And before these things could be done, there must be a short period of transition while a constitution was framed which would fit in with the terms of the Treaty, and be suitable to the country's needs.

Had Orangemen and Nationalists joined together, there would have been no impediment to the building up of the nation, though the builders' energies might have been severely taxed. For the effects of centuries of misgovernment are difficult to obliterate. But the Orangemen would not co-operate. The Treaty provided that if " Ulster " preferred to remain outside the Free State she must submit to a ratification of boundaries. The wishes of the people must be considered, and if Belfast would not be coerced by Dublin, neither must Fermanagh and Tyrone be coerced by Belfast. These counties, as well as Derry City and parts of Armagh and Down wished to be part of the Free State; and there would be no peace in Ulster or in Ireland if they were forcibly placed under the rule of Belfast. Both Mr. Collins and Sir James Craig knew this well, as they knew that the Ulster question had been used for party purposes by British politicians. They agreed to eliminate the British and settle their disputes between themselves. On his side, Mr. Collins took off the Belfast boycott, while Sir James Craig undertook to have the expelled Catholic workers taken back and no longer penalized because of their religion.

These two gentlemen further agreed to appoint a boundary commission to report to themselves, and high hopes were entertained that a settlement would soon be reached. But these hopes were soon blasted. For Sir James Craig could not conceive that more was meant than the mere ratification of a boundary line;

while Mr. Collins contended that those in the six counties who desired to go with Belfast might do so, but those who desired to be with the Free State must also get their way. There must be no coercion on either side of the Boyne. In this matter a deadlock was reached and nothing was left but to appeal to the exact terms of the Treaty.

Even more serious and more vexatious were the difficulties coming from the Nationalists themselves. Mr. De Valera would not come into the Free State and work for a Republic, nor would he act on a joint committee to be formed from both sides to carry on the government during the period of transition. He would be Cæsar or nothing, and during the debates on the Treaty he was completely dominated by personal ambition. He forgot those detained in prison, even those under sentence of death. Rather than acquiesce in having Mr. Griffith appointed President he and his followers left the hall, though Mr. Griffith in 1917 had stepped down from the first position to make room for Mr. De Valera. The founder of Sinn Fein thus unselfishly effaced himself, believing it was best for Ireland. Mr. De Valera's main anxiety was that the Irish Republic should not be subverted. If this were attempted, he threatened that the army would not obey. He would not recognize the vote of the Dail, nor the vote of the Sinn Fein organization, nor even the vote of the people at a general election. If this latter vote favoured himself, it was the outcome of deliberation and patriotism, but if the vote was against him, the people were ill-informed and must be enlightened. They were, he said, intimidated by the threat of war with England. This was the autocrat's idea of self-determination, of government by consent of the governed.

The hint to the army was soon taken, for intimidation came only from Mr. De Valera's supporters. Among the military members of the Dail, the men of courage and resource, such as Collins, Mulcahy, Brennan, O'Duffy and M'Keown, men who had shown capacity for war, were all in favour of the Treaty. Among the officers and men outside it was the same. A few, having suffered much, hated England so much that they wanted

war. The greater part, however, wanted peace, the men who had been wounded or imprisoned or interned. They were still ready to suffer and endure if liberty was to be denied Ireland; but with liberty secured in an Irish Free State, they wanted no vain chasing after a phantom republic. They had had enough of shooting and torturing, of loss of property and life.

The opposition to the Treaty and the intimidation came from a less reputable class. When the fight raged, these kept out of the fight. They shunned ambushes; they looked askance at flying columns and dreaded their perils; they had no desire even to be enrolled in the I.R.A.; and in order to secure immunity from arrest or imprisonment they kept on good terms with the police. Since the truce they had become brave and even bloodthirsty. Hence they became known as the Trucleers. They flocked into the Republican army, shouted " Up, De Valera " and " Up, the Republic ", and demanded the rejection of the Treaty, without in the least understanding its terms. Most of these were young men, many of them mere boys. Disinclined to work on their fathers' farms, they preferred a life of idleness in some military barrack, and as the soldiers and police marched out, these lads marched into the vacant barracks and occupied them. They cared nothing for a military life, took no interest in military training, chafed under military discipline, and for the most part spent their time in aimlessly strutting about the streets of the town.

Not being recognized by the Provisional Government, and indeed being its avowed opponents, they got no pay, nor were they provided with rations. Their wants were in part supplied by collections and concerts and dances and horse-races; and when all else failed they got goods, promising future payment, when, as they expected, the government of the country would be in their hands. Traders supplied goods and others gave subscriptions because they were intimidated; and when canvassed on behalf of Republican candidates, voters feared to give a refusal, for these young men went about with revolvers in their pockets.

The women also in many cases were avowed opponents of

the Treaty. Of the six women Deputies every one voted for its rejection; and in violence of language and recklessness of statement they went far beyond the men. In the cities and towns, a certain proportion of young girls imitated their sisters in Dail Eireann. Vanity, eccentricity, unreasoning hatred of England, love of notoriety rather than real love of country were their dominating motives. They had their own organization, the Cuman-namban, and at a convention specially convened they pronounced by a large majority against the Treaty. They were ready for renewed war, and set an example which they hoped the men might follow. In the days of Parnell the thoughtless young men and the equally thoughtless young girls urged Parnell to his doom; and now a new generation of young men and young women was urging De Valera to his own ruin and the ruin of Ireland.

CHAPTER XIX

Flouting the People

Those who had confidence in Mr. De Valera's sagacity and statesmanship, as well as in his sincerity and unselfishness, received a rude shock when they read the debates in the Dail on the Treaty. Mr. De Valera, they had always been told, was a modest and unassuming man, deeply religious and entirely devoid of self-seeking or egotism. But in these debates he showed himself to be vain and self-conceited, resentful of criticism, impatient of contradiction, autocratic and overbearing, speaking as Napoleon might have spoken after Austerlitz. Protesting that he was sick of politics, and that he wished to retire from public life, he clung to the Presidency of the Dail to the last, and then to the Presidency of the Sinn Fein organization. Elected only to be President of Dail Eireann, he called himself President of the Republic, and in America took to himself all the honours given him, though they were, as all the world knew, given to him as the recognized chief and spokesman of the Irish people.

His colleagues, who knew all that had happened behind the scenes, were bewildered. Mr. Lloyd George had distinctly laid it down that there could be no negotiations on the basis of an Irish Republic, or of an Ireland cut off from the British Empire, and Mr. De Valera had accepted these conditions, though it must be said with reluctance. And his special friend and confidant, Mr. Childers, had done his best to thwart an arrangement such as had been arrived at under the Treaty. The alternative to an amicable arrangement, as Mr. De Valera well knew, was intensified warfare, and he told his colleagues in private that he wanted

no such war. He wanted no Sherman's ride through Georgia, and those who knew, as he did, what had often taken place in Ireland, were well aware that Sherman's ride, with its concomitant horrors, would be easily paralleled if not exceeded by a renewal of the Irish war. Had Messrs. Griffith and Collins been less careful to wound his feelings, they might with plausibility have suggested that Mr. De Valera's opposition was due to jealousy. Nor had those who ought to know little doubt that jealousy was not wanting; and if Mr. De Valera himself had secured such terms as the Treaty gave, he would have expected the acclamation of the whole nation. Nial Garve O'Donnell was jealous of Red Hugh, and therefore betrayed him, and O'Cahan turned against Hugh O'Neill, and in Irish history such jealousy and treachery had been often repeated. Mr. De Valera would not indeed go over to the English, who, on their side, did not want him, and would not have accepted his services. But though he would not, he said, thwart Messrs. Griffith and Collins, he would not co-operate with them, nor look with a friendly eye on the Provisional Government. These gentlemen must not attempt to subvert the Republic, and if they did, the Irish Republican Army would not obey them. This even more than jealousy was the cause of Mr. De Valera's opposition. He wanted to be President of the Irish Republic, and hence his fantastic scheme embodied in Document No. 2 of external association with the British Empire. This would involve recognition of the King of Great Britain as head of the associated states, and a yearly tribute paid to him from Ireland, and it would stereotype the position of a separated Ulster. But Mr. De Valera could be President of the Republic under the arrangement, and his vanity would be appeased. As he had not then been one of the plenipotentiaries in London and could not as such claim the merit of gaining the terms of the Treaty, and as he had no prospect of obtaining the terms of Document No. 2, and so being President of the Republic, he was determined to wreck the settlement reached, even if this meant the ruin of Ireland. He declared indeed that he did not want war, and that there was a constitutional way of settling the

difficulties that had arisen. But he also said that he would not abide by the vote of the people. They were voting under threat of war with England, and therefore voting under duress, and such a vote could not be regarded as the free expression of the people's will.

On these lines, he began and continued his opposition. To a representative of the French paper, the *Echo de Paris*, he said, in the end of January, that while differing with Messrs. Griffith and Collins, "We have no intention of coming into direct conflict with the majority in the Irish Parliament, but my aim is to lead the Irish people towards the aspirations for which they have always fought. Still we will not play the game of our oppressors in creating internal troubles which would furnish them with a pretext for meddling in our affairs to crush us. There may be two camps in Ireland, but they are not easy to distinguish one from the other. The one contains soldiers ready to attack. In the other are the reinforcements."

With a hankering after the title of President, he spoke as President of the Sinn Fein organization; and this title might readily be conceded to him without detriment to the national interest, though it would be more advisable not to have Ireland split up into two camps, when there was so much constructive work to be done. In Mr. De Valera's view, however, constructive work must stand aside as long as there was danger to the Republic, and at a largely attended meeting in Dublin, on the 12th of February, he reiterated his objections to the Treaty, and had the following resolution passed:

"That we, citizens of Ireland's capital, in mass meeting assembled at this fateful hour, when the commonwealth is in danger, when the rights of our nation are being surrendered and the aspirations of our people misrepresented, hereby affirm and proclaim: that the Irish nation is one and indivisible; that all state authority in Ireland is derived solely from the people of Ireland; that the British Crown is an alien crown; that Ireland is no part of the British Empire and that the Republic of Ireland alone expresses the free will of the Irish people."

Other resolutions pledged the people's allegiance to the Republic, repudiated the Treaty as having been obtained under duress, and therefore this pretended Treaty between Ireland and Britain was null and void; and that to accept such a treaty and disestablish the Republic before the constitution of the Free State was known " is an obvious betrayal of Ireland's interests and is not to be tolerated ".

Defeated in Dail Eireann, Mr. De Valera hoped at least to have the support of the Sinn Fein organization, and was much disappointed when the Standing Committee of that organization voted against him. But one of his supporters suggested an appeal to the Sinn Fein clubs throughout the country and proposed that these clubs should send delegates to a national convention or Ard-Fheis in Dublin, where a great national pronouncement could be had. It was a clever move. The Sinn Fein organization was then only a shadow of its former self. The less virile clubs through the country had melted away before the assaults of the Auxiliaries and Black and Tans. But the terrorism of Sir Hamar Greenwood was gone and these timid clubs might now be easily galvanized into life, and the more timid they were in the days of coercion, the more extreme and outspoken they would be in demanding a Republic, now that all danger of prosecution and imprisonment was past. From such clubs, large numbers were recruited to support Mr. De Valera, and when the Ard-Fheis met in Dublin on February 21, the opponents of the Treaty had mustered in considerable strength. It was evident that Mr. Collins feared being defeated, and to avert such and the consequences it would entail, he consented to compromise with his opponents. By many of his own supporters it was regarded as a defeat; for Mr. De Valera, it was clear, wanted no election, then, and the agreement entered into provided that there should be no election for three months. Meantime the Officer Board of Sinn Fein would be the Standing Committee of the organization. At the election the constitution of the Free State would be ready and would go before the country as part of the issue. In the interval Dail Eireann would continue to function and would not

be displaced by an adverse vote. Mr. De Valera, on his part, would assist the Government to maintain order.

His anxiety to postpone the election was well known, and also his desire to continue a position of authority in the Sinn Fein organization; and under these heads the Ard-Fheis agreement was a victory for him. And the putting forward of the Constitution with the Treaty at the election would afford him many opportunities for the exercise of his fault-finding faculty. On the other hand, it was a gain for his opponents that a snatch vote in the Dail, where parties were almost equal, would not displace their government, or disturb the continuity of their policy. And it was of the first importance that Mr. De Valera would co-operate in the maintenance of order.

But it soon appeared that he would not abide by any arrangement he entered into, and that his promises of co-operation were written on sand. No sooner had the Ard-Fheis agreement been arrived at and a general election fixed for the month of May than Mr. De Valera raised a new issue about the register. It was old, he said, and out of date; it was inaccurate and invalid; and if an election were held on such a register, the verdict would not be the verdict of the people. Thousands who ought to have votes would be excluded from the polls. Mr. Griffith answered that this issue was raised for the first time. A new register could not be made out in less than five or six months, which would involve further delay, and he was against delay. The people should decide for or against the Treaty within the stipulated three months. The country wanted to settle down, and this would be impossible if there were further delay. But Mr. De Valera was not satisfied. He charged Mr. Griffith with the desire to deprive tens of thousands of men and women of their fundamental rights as citizens, and this because he believed that these young men and women would cast their votes against the Treaty.

Worse still was his tampering with the army. Pending the establishment of the Free State, the Irish Republican Army would occupy the barracks which were already being vacated by British troops, and would owe allegiance to Dail Eireann. And

as Dail Eireann had declared for the Treaty, the Provisional Government set up would be maintained. This did not preclude individual members of the I.R.A. from voting against the Treaty at the general election if they had votes, and if the majority of the votes throughout the country were cast against the Treaty, the Provisional Government ceased to exist, and the army and people combined, having declared for a Republic, would endeavour to maintain it. But the army as such could not take part in political discussion or in public meetings, nor endeavour to influence the electors, even by moral suasion, still less by physical force. As in all constitutionally governed countries, the army must be the servant, not the master, of the people, owing its allegiance to the Government set up by the people, and therefore taking its orders from the Ministry which in Ireland was the Ministry appointed by Dail Eireann.

In spite of all this, a section of the army, officered by special friends of Mr. De Valera, publicly denounced Dail Eireann, and repudiated its authority. This was in Tipperary and was followed by the revolt of another section in Limerick. This latter section was soon joined by others from the other counties of Munster and even from Galway and Mayo, and in the early days of March they entered Limerick city. They proceeded to take over hotels and other public buildings, and commandeered food supplies, protested that they would have a Republic and nothing else, and threatened to attack the barracks lately vacated by British troops, and then occupied by Irish troops loyal to Dail Eireann and the established Government. To meet the threatened attack, loyal troops were drafted into the city, from Clare and elsewhere, bringing with them machine-guns and armoured cars, and it seemed as if nothing could stop the outbreak of civil war.

If it broke out, there would be much bloodshed, though as the loyal troops were more numerous and better equipped, they would have certainly driven the Irregulars from their positions, and perhaps ended the power of the mutineers throughout the country. Nor was Mr. Griffith, though a man of peace, averse to use force that the rebellion might be put down; but the pros-

pect of Irishmen shedding each other's blood the moment they had got liberty was too much even for the friends of the mutineers, and the intervention of Mr. O'Mara, Mayor of Limerick, himself an opponent of the Treaty, averted the horrors of civil war. An agreement was arrived at, and all those who had come to Limerick went back to their quarters. This left the mutineers unpunished and still in possession of their arms and of the positions they occupied, though they were compelled to vacate the commandeered hotels in Limerick.

During these dark days, no word of condemnation to his armed and mutinous followers came from Mr. De Valera. On the contrary, having predicted during the Dail debates that the army would not ratify the Treaty and subvert the Republic, he must have rejoiced that his prophecy had come true. His friend and supporter, Mr. O'Mara, had wisely declared that " precipitating war among ourselves will settle neither this question nor any other. I suggest that it is high time for the people of Ireland, soldiers and civilians, to find another means than that of the rifle and the bayonet of settling differences among themselves, whether they be questions of principles or politics." This, however, was not Mr. De Valera's view. Surrounded by his supporters, not a few of them armed volunteers, he told them at Carrick-on-Suir on St. Patrick's Day: " If the Treaty was accepted, the fight for freedom would still go on, and the Irish people, instead of fighting foreign soldiers would have to fight the Irish soldiers of an Irish Government set up by Irishmen. If the Treaty was not rejected, perhaps it was over the bodies of the young men he saw around him that day the fight for Irish freedom may be fought."

At Thurles, on the same day, he said:

" If they accepted the Treaty, they would have to complete it, not over the bodies of foreign soldiers, but over the dead bodies of their own countrymen. They would have to wade through Irish blood, through the blood of the soldiers of the Irish Government, and through, perhaps, the blood of some of the members of the Government in order to get Irish freedom." Nor

did reflection act as a corrective of this inflammatory language, for two days later at Killarney he told his audience: "If this Treaty is ratified by your votes, the Volunteers, in order to achieve freedom, will have to march over the dead bodies of their own brothers. They will have to wade through Irish blood."

This was Mr. De Valera's peculiar method of settling Irish difficulties in a constitutional manner. It was for the liberty of the people the desperate fight had been made against the Black and Tans. It was for the liberty of the people the conference had been held in London and the Treaty signed. And the people had instructed their Deputies in Dail Eireann to vote for its acceptance, thankful that peace and liberty had been secured. But to Mr. De Valera, so honoured and trusted by the people, the people counted for nothing. They had no right to accept the Treaty, no right to vote for it at a general election. Even a small section of the army might defy the whole army and the whole people, and rather than allow them to accept the Treaty might declare war on them and wade through their blood. When Irish newspapers attached to his words their proper and obvious meaning, Mr. De Valera protested that he was merely saying what might happen, he was only playing the rôle of prophet. But subsequent events gave a tragic significance to his words. They were a declaration of policy rather than a prophecy, and if he was a prophet, he wished to have his prophecy fulfilled.

Already harm had been done which it would be difficult to repair. Several of the army leaders held seats in the Dail, and had been bitter assailants of the Treaty; nor could they understand why they should not be free to discuss and to condemn in the army as in the Dail. Others were fanatical upholders of the Republic, ignorantly asserting that a republican form of government was necessary for freedom. A third, and not an inconsiderable portion of these army leaders, wanted high positions in the army, believing themselves better qualified than those who had been appointed to such positions by Mr. Mulcahy, the Minister of Defence. These coalescing elements of discontent came together early in January, and demanded a convention of

the leaders of the whole army. The majority, they knew, were favourable to the Treaty and loyal to General Head-quarters under the Minister of Defence, yet they demanded that the dissident minority should have an equal number of delegates with the majority. And they declared in advance that the convention must reaffirm its allegiance to the Republic, and that the army must continue as the army of the Republic, not subject to the Dail but to an executive to be appointed by the convention. Mr. Mulcahy replied that the Dail was the elected Government of the Republic, with supreme control of the army, and that neither he nor the whole Dail Executive had power to change the supreme control of the army. He was conciliatory and anxious for unity, and was not averse to an army convention where many army matters might be amicably discussed. But he would have nothing to do with revolutionary changes, nothing to do with a convention where it was proposed to repudiate the Dail and set up a military dictatorship. And when the mutinous officers told him that they would hold their convention on the 26th of March, he replied that those who took part in it would cease to be members of the I.R.A., no longer recognized by the Dail and no longer entitled to pay.

The mutineers, however, persevered, and a few days before the 26th, their spokesman, Mr. Rory O'Connor, gave a press interview outlining the policy of himself and his colleagues. Unlike many of the army leaders, O'Connor was a man of education, educated at a university and an engineer by profession. He was a brave man and had done his share of fighting against the British. But he was a man of little capacity, obstinate, conceited and vain, impracticable and visionary, fanatically wedded to his own opinions, with crude notions of popular rights, and no sympathy with popular ideals if they ran counter to his own. Desirous of personal advertisement, and with something of the attitude of an acknowledged leader of men, he conveyed to the pressmen at Dublin that he would meet them at his head-quarters, and when they came, he graciously intimated that they might ask any questions they wished and he would answer.

Asked if he repudiated the Dail, he emphatically answered yes, and for the reason that it had betrayed the Republic. For the same reason, he would not acknowledge President Griffith. Asked if there was any government to which the army would give allegiance, he said no. He wanted an executive to control the army, and he repudiated General Head-quarters and the Minister of Defence, because though nominally acting for the Rupublic, they were really training an army for the Free State, which was to be set up under the Treaty. Asked would the army be that of the people or that of De Valera, he declared it would be neither; it would be the army of the Republic. Asked was there going to be a military dictatorship he said, " You can take it that way if you like ". He and his friends did not in the least object to be called mutineers. The army could ban an election, and might overthrow the Government, as armies had often done. Shocked at these statements from a man with professions of patriotism on his lips, an American pressman urged: " Then no matter what the majority of the people decide as right, your intention is that what you think is right shall be enforced. If you do that, you are undertaking a terrific responsibility." This Mr. O'Connor freely admitted, and the interview with this strange specimen of an Irish leader came to an end.

Mr. O'Connor maintained that on his side was 80 per cent of the army, and that there were desertions from the other side every day. But the Chief of Staff, General O'Duffy, speaking for General Head-quarters under Mr. Mulcahy, had no difficulty in showing that Mr. O'Connor's figures were wrong. Every soldier in Ireland had sworn allegiance to the Dail, and in twelve out of sixteen divisions, at least 75 per cent of the army was still loyal to the Dail. When the Dail disappeared as the governing authority of the country, the army might reconsider its position and no doubt would transfer its allegiance to the Free State. For the present, however, it was the army of the Dail, and the vast majority of its members had no intention of following the lead of Mr. O'Connor. Generally the rank and file took the side of their officers, and in the five northern divisions the vast

majority of the officers were loyal, as were the rank and file. In Munster, on the other hand, the majority of the officers were disloyal, but were not in every case followed by the men, and efforts were being made to reorganize the Munster divisions and provide the men with loyal officers. Leinster was very largely on the side of the Dail, though there were many mutineers in Dublin. In Connaught also, but especially in Mayo, the mutineers were numerous. On the whole, however, General O'Duffy could claim that General Head-quarters was in a strong position, with a fairly equipped, well-trained and well-disciplined army; and when Mr. O'Connor claimed that 80 per cent were with him, it was a gross exaggeration [1].

He had, however, a sufficient amount to cause trouble, and the military dictatorship proceeded at once to deny the right of public meeting and the liberty of the press. At Waterford and Dungarvan, Mr. Collins, in trying to explain the Treaty, was persistently interrupted by an organized gang of rowdies. At Cork, his opponents' only arguments were revolvers and red pepper. And the attack on the press took visible shape when *The Freeman's Journal* was destroyed. It had freely criticized and condemned the mutinous officers and the soldiers who followed them, and it had exposed Mr. De Valera's special friend Mr. Childers as a British jingo. This was not to be tolerated, and at dead of night, on the 30th of March, nearly one hundred young men arrived in lorries, armed with revolvers and carrying sledges and petrol tins, and proceeded to demolish the fine machinery of a great newspaper. When the sledgers had done their work, they poured petrol out and set the building on fire, and then departed, leaving a fine property in ruins. They also left a notice that the publication had been suspended " by order of the Army Council, Irish Republican Army Executive ".

When Mr. De Valera pointed out that there was a constitutional way of settling the dispute about the Treaty, and that this way should not be departed from, he was certainly insincere, as after events proved. But even had he been sincere, he was, in

[1] *An T'Oglach*, April 25. This was the official organ of G.H.Q.

the end of March, impotent. The men of the new Army Executive were not his servants, nor even his co-operators, but his masters, responsible to nobody and holding in supreme contempt both constitutional ways and the rights of the people. Provincial newspapers which criticized them, they suppressed. *The Independent* they could not destroy, as its offices were guarded by the National army. But the Irregulars, as they came to be called, attacked the vans carrying *The Independent*, and destroyed both vans and papers; or they took the parcels of the paper from the trains and burned them on the railway platform, while the frightened passengers were kept at a distance by armed men.

Mr. De Valera and his friends were not molested when they attended public meetings at which they vigorously denounced the Treaty. But the Irregulars would have no public meetings addressed by Messrs. Collins and Griffith and their friends, who pointed out the merits of the Treaty and the great concessions which it gave. At Tullamore, the roads were trenched and blocked, so as to prevent people attending to hear Mr. Collins; and when Mr. Collins returned from Tullamore to Dublin, he was fired at by Irregulars in Parnell Square who intended to murder him but failed. Near Wexford the trains from Dublin and Waterford were stopped by armed men. Where the railway-bridge spans the Slaney, the rails were torn up, and men sent to repair the line, so that the train from Dublin might safely pass, were attacked by Irregulars armed with revolvers, who stopped their work and threw their tools into the river. The various contingents coming to Castlebar to hear Mr. Collins were forcibly prevented. The trains were stopped, the rails torn up, the roads trenched and blocked, cars turned back and their occupants threatened. And when, in spite of all opposition four thousand persons assembled at Castlebar, the meeting was broken up and dispersed by armed men, who, in officers' uniforms and brandishing revolvers, reeled through the town in a drunken condition.

At Sligo, a meeting was announced to be held on Sunday, the 16th April, and was to be addressed by Mr. Griffith. The

local Irregular leader, a man named Pilkington, would not allow the meeting. Copying the methods of the Black and Tans, he pretended that there would be danger of a breach of the peace, and covered the dead walls of the town with a proclamation prohibiting the meeting. He signed it as the Competent Military Authority, responsible for the peace of the district. Armed Irregulars were then drafted into the town, public buildings were occupied, strategic positions were taken up, goods commandeered, and with the roads blocked to prevent Mr. Griffith coming, and guns trained on the proposed place of meeting, Pilkington awaited events.

But Mr. Griffith was not so easily turned back. He came with Generals O'Connell and M'Keown, with rifles and revolvers, machine-guns and an armoured car, and though he had but forty men in all, he put the Irregulars to flight. A few of them were bold enough to fire from a hotel which they occupied; but a couple of well-directed shots from General O'Connell's men laid two of the Irregulars low, and then their companions ran. They hastily abandoned the houses they occupied and the goods they had looted, hid themselves in yards or cellars or fled along the country roads to their homes. And while they were thus occupied, the National troops marched through the streets, cheered by the people of the town. And Mr. Griffith, mounting the platform, made his case for the Treaty.

While the Irish people were thus harassed by armed men, who, as if in irony, posed as the people's defenders, Mr. De Valera took the public into his confidence. And his attitude was characteristic. He would accept no responsibility for the action of the Irregulars. But " he was sure that they were animated by the sole desire to save the Irish people from being forced by the threats of the British Government into what is regarded as a surrender of their just claims to complete independence ".

These events in the twenty-six counties of the South had a disastrous effect in the six counties of north-east Ulster, and especially in Belfast. In January, Mr. Collins and Sir James

Craig had signed the following agreement acting for their respective Governments.

"1. The Boundary Commission as outlined in the Treaty to be altered. The Governments of the Free State and of Northern Ireland to appoint one representative each to report to Mr. Collins and Sir James Craig, who will mutually agree on behalf of their respective Governments on the future boundaries between the two.

"2. Without prejudice to the future consideration by his Government of the question of tariffs, Mr. Collins undertakes that the Belfast boycott is to be discontinued immediately, and Sir James Craig undertakes to facilitate in every possible way the return of Catholic workmen, without tests—to the shipyards, and when trade-revival enables the firms concerned to absorb the present unemployed. In the meantime, a system of relief on a large scale is being arranged to carry over the period of distress.

"3. Representatives of both Governments to facilitate a settlement of the railway dispute.

"4. The two Governments to endeavour to devise a more suitable system than the Council of Ireland for dealing with problems affecting all Ireland.

"5. A further meeting will take place at a subsequent date in Ireland between the signatories to this agreement to discuss the question of the amnesty of post-truce prisoners."

If this was not a first step towards unity it was at least a first step towards better relations between North-east Ulster and the rest of Ireland. It meant much to commercial Belfast to have the boycott removed, and it would be a great relief to the expelled and destitute Catholic workmen to be allowed back to their work, without being penalized by religious or political disabilities. In the better atmosphere thus created Mr. Collins and Sir James Craig would find it easier to fix the boundaries between the two

Governments. Nor could there be any doubt that the British Parliament would willingly sanction any agreement thus attained.

There were, however, two formidable obstacles to peace. Neither Mr. De Valera nor the Irregular leaders of the army wanted anything to occur which would redound to the credit of the Provisional Government, and hence they viewed the Collins-Craig agreement with disfavour. The Belfast boycott must be continued, and Belfast goods going south were destroyed. And there were attacks on barracks in the six counties, obviously prompted from outside and certainly not with the approval of Mr. Collins or Mr. Griffith. This roused the ire of the Belfast Orange mob, and inoffensive Catholics, because they were Catholics, were attacked by armed ruffians who destroyed their property and ruthlessly shot them down. Reprisals followed, and sometimes Protestants fell before the assaults of enraged and armed Catholics. In less than a month from February 11, thirty-nine persons were murdered in Belfast of whom twenty-two were Catholics and seventeen Protestants, and when it is borne in mind that the Protestants were three times more numerous than the Catholics, it can be seen that the Catholics suffered far more than their opponents.

Outrages continued. Special constables in Belfast were shot down in broad daylight. A Catholic family, the MacMahons, had four of its members murdered at night apparently because they were Catholics, for they were not politicians. In one week, the Belfast Catholic casualties were eighteen dead and twenty-six wounded. And as the funeral procession of the four murdered MacMahons passed through the city, it was accompanied by armoured cars to protect the mourners from armed Orangemen. Public opinion throughout the world was shocked, and Mr. Churchill declared in the House of Commons that " they had to search Europe to find instances of atrocity, barbarism, cold-blooded inhuman animal vengeance equal to that of the Mac-Mahon murders ".

Sir James Craig had not exerted himself as he might have to restrain his co-religionists and carry out his arrangement with

Mr. Collins. But he was ashamed of the state of Belfast, and conscious that some further effort at appeasement should be made. He therefore responded to the suggestions of the British Government for a conference, and this was held in London and eventuated in a new and far-reaching agreement, bearing date the 30th of March. On the part of the Provisional Government, it was signed by Messrs. Griffith, Collins, Duggan and O'Higgins. The northerners were Sir James Craig, Mr. Archdale and Lord Londonderry. And the agreement was countersigned on behalf of the British Government by Mr. Churchill, Sir Worthington Evans, Sir H. Greenwood and Lord Peel. Under its terms a special police force, half Catholic and half Protestant, was to be set up in mixed areas, and a Catholic Advisory Committee to select suitable Catholic recruits. Nor were domiciliary searches for arms to be made except by a mixed force. Catholics expelled from their homes were to be allowed to return; and for unemployed workers, mostly Catholic, the British Government voted a sum of half a million. Serious offences were to be tried by the Lord Chief Justice and a Lord Justice of Appeal, without a jury, and there was to be a mutual release of prisoners by the Northern and Southern Governments. A Committee, half Catholic and half Protestant, was to sit in Belfast and investigate complaints as to intimidation and other outrages. And after the constitution of the Free State had been approved by the British Parliament, the Northern and Free State Governments were to meet in consultation and endeavour to devise some plan by whch the unity of Ireland could be secured. In the meantime, the two Governments appealed to public men and to the press for moderation of language and action in the interests of peace.

This agreement commenced by saying, "Peace is to-day declared," and Dr. MacRory, the Bishop of Down and Connor, who had so long been harassed by what he saw in Belfast, was pleased. Hitherto there had not, he said, "been anything like due consideration for the rights of Catholics in Belfast. But he willingly recognized that the agreement now entered into seems to have been conceived in a new spirit which does them credit,

and which seems to promise a recognition of our rights. I hope and believe, and shall do my best to secure that our people heartily will respond to that new spirit." (*Catholic Directory*, p. 560.)

But again, as in January, there were influences at work not favourable to appeasement. The Orange bravoes of the Belfast shipyards would have no brotherhood with Catholic workers. The special constables, recruited from the Orange lodges, were ready, with or without excuse, to turn their arms against the Papists. The city hooligans, urged on by bigotry and plunder, were reluctant to cease raiding Catholic shops. Even Sir James Craig and his political associates still clung to ascendancy and privilege. And the action of Mr. De Valera and the Irregulars in their continuance of the Belfast boycott, their seizure of Protestant buildings in Dublin, their attacks on Protestants, their endeavours to establish a military dictatorship, were potent factors for evil south of the Boyne.

Outrages continued, and in the end of April the Belfast Catholic Protection Committee appealed to Mr. Churchill, telling him that the Belfast Catholics were being " gradually but certainly exterminated by murder, assaults, and starvation; their homes burned, streets swept by snipers, life unbearable, military forces inactive, special police hostile, and Northern Government either culpable or inefficient ". And they asked that the British Government might save the Belfast Catholics as they had already saved the Bulgarians and Armenians.[1]

Alarmed at the disregard of popular rights and of moral principles which prevailed, the Catholic Bishops assembled in special meeting, issued a joint pastoral letter to the Catholics of Ireland.

They lamented that the country was torn by unchristian feuds and factions and that nothing but " the good sense and solid virtue of the body of the people has saved us so far from general anarchy and civil war. Like the great bulk of the nation, we think that the best and wisest course for Ireland is to accept

[1] *Catholic Directory*.

the Treaty and make the most of the freedom it undoubtedly brings us, freedom for the first time in seven hundred years."

But there was a national question on which the people as a whole had a right to pronounce by an election carried out in the ordinary constitutional way.

They saw that the cause of all "the present scandal and turmoil is the unconstitutional policy of certain leaders who think themselves entitled to force their views upon the nation, not by reason, but by firearms.

"Neither the army nor a part of it could declare itself independent of all civil authority. The army as a whole, and still more a part of it has no such moral right. Such a claim is a claim to military despotism, and subversive of all civil liberty. It is an immoral usurpation and confiscation of the people's rights."

The young men of the country were solemnly warned that when they proceeded to make shameful war upon their own country they were parricides and not patriots.

"When they shoot their brothers on the opposite side, they are murderers. When they injure public and private property they are robbers and brigands, bound to restitution; all sins and crimes of the most heinous guilt.

"We can hardly believe it possible that the Military Executive are in earnest when they claim the right, if they like, to suppress the election by force of arms. . . .

"Irishmen all over the world expect it of us that we will not allow freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of election, freedom of civil life in all its branches, to be stifled by a few because they have guns in their hands and foolishly think they are acting as the champions of liberty when they are but digging freedom's grave."

Finally, they appeal in the name of God, of Ireland and of national dignity, to the leaders on both sides to agree at least on two things—"that the use of the revolver must cease, and the elections, the national expression of self-determination, be allowed to be held, free from all violence".[1]

[1] This pastoral was read in all the churches of Ireland on May 7.

As if in answer to this solemn appeal, a conference was held as the month of April was nearing its end, in the Mansion House, Dublin. It was called together by Dr. Byrne, Archbishop of Dublin, and Mr. O'Neill, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and in addition to these two consisted of Messrs. Griffith, Collins, De Valera, Cathal Brugha, O'Mara, O'Brien, Johnson, and O'Shannon. Messrs. Griffith and Collins took their stand on the Treaty, and were determined that the Treaty position must not be imperilled. Messrs. De Valera and Brugha were equally strong for the rejection of the Treaty, but professed a willingness to explore every avenue to unity and peace. Mr. O'Mara, Mayor of Limerick, was a supporter of Mr. De Valera, but was less extreme and more reasonable than Mr. Brugha. Messrs. O'Brien, Johnson and O'Shannon represented Irish Labour. They had already shown their disgust with factionism, and had shown their power by declaring a one-day strike during which all public services had been suspended. Their rôle was that of friendly intermediaries between rival politicians. And this was also the rôle of the Archbishop and the Lord Mayor.

Peace, however, could not come as long as Mr. De Valera maintained his irreconcilable position, as long as quibbling took the place of statesmanship. At the Ard-Fheis in February, it was agreed that there should be no election for three months, pending the production of the Free State Constitution, and that both Treaty and Constitution would be submitted to the electors. Not a word was said about the register; but no sooner was the agreement arrived at, than Mr. De Valera declared the register to be incorrect and invalid, because, he said, thousands of young men and women would be excluded from the polling booths.

In the interval, the revolt of a section of the army had occurred, and had Mr. De Valera been quite sincere in abandoning the Republic, it was quite certain that Mr. O'Connor and his friends would not acquiesce. This was shown by their communication to Dail Eireann, laying down their terms for a unification of the army. They insisted on maintaining the Republic and

Dail Eireann as the Government of the Republic, and the only Government of the country. The army must be controlled by an army executive, elected by the army and not responsible to the Dail. The Civic Guard, which was the new police force, must be at once disbanded and police work done by the army alone. All debts due by both sections of the army must at once be paid, and all future requirements to be met by the Dail out of the national revenue. Finally, no election was to be held until England withdrew her threat of war. This was a demand for the establishment of a military dictatorship; for an army superior to the people and not controlled by them. And if no election could be held until there was no threat of war from England, it could not be held until the British Empire had ceased to exist.

The publication of these terms on the eve of the conference was calculated to hamper Mr. De Valera if he entered the conference as a peacemaker. But it soon appeared that he wanted no peace except on his own terms, and was quite as much opposed to consulting the people as Mr. O'Connor.

Messrs. Griffith and Collins proposed: " That a General Election should proceed in June on the issue of the Treaty and Constitution; that the opponents of the Treaty should guarantee that no attempt would be made to intimidate or obstruct the voters from exercising their lawful rights; that in the event of the issue being favourable to the Government, the Constitution should be enacted subject to any amendments carried by the House; that after its enactment and other essential legislation, including the enactment of adult suffrage, the Irish Parliament should dissolve, and a new election be held in which every adult would participate, ratifying or non-ratifying by the popular voice the Constitution ". As Messrs. De Valera and Brugha would not assent to this proposal, a new Government proposal was made: " That an election should be held in June on the single issue of the Treaty. That the body elected should devise the Constitution and pass a measure of adult suffrage, thereafter dissolving and giving the adult population a free opportunity of accepting, rejecting, or amending the constitution."

As Mr. De Valera still objected to the register, a third proposal was made by Messrs. Griffith and Collins: "To meet specious objections raised as to the state of the register, it is now proposed that a plebiscite of the people on the issue of acceptance or rejection of the Treaty shall be taken within a month, and a full opportunity be afforded to every adult to vote. The subjoined scheme was put forward as the foundation of the machinery.

"One day, preferably Sunday, to be set apart for the taking of a plebiscite. Counties to be divided into parishes, or half parishes, cities to be divided into blocks of streets. Organization to be initiated by clergy of all denominations, labour party and public bodies. People to be instructed where to assemble by public notices, press, and churches. The hour to be two o'clock. No person to be allowed into the streets or parks after three o'clock. The count to commence at 3.30. The method would be single file through barriers, two official counters to attend each barrier. The appointment of official counters is an important matter. A representative of each side would be entitled to attend each pair of official counters.

"Committees drawn from the people in each area to be formed for the purpose of carrying out the details, such as placing in convenient positions and preventing any attempt to interfere with the arrangements.

"It is suggested that the official counters at each barrier should have the right to decide as to the age of persons who might appear doubtful, or it might be better to leave this job entirely to the clergy.

"It is essential that the hours of assembling and counting all over Ireland should be the same.

"Arrangements can be made to have hospitals and such institutions supplied with ballot papers, also individuals at their homes, who may be medically certified as unable to attend, can also be supplied.

"This plebiscite was rejected by the opposition leaders both in principle and detail."[1]

[1] Official statement of Messrs. Griffith and Collins.

The last paragraph shows that the limits of concession had been reached, and that nothing could satisfy Mr. De Valera's unreasoning demands. But it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise; for, if the army must be the rulers of the country, a Republic the form of government, and Mr. De Valera the President, the Treaty must go, the people were flouted and war with England was inevitable. If the election was likely to result in an adverse vote for the Government, Mr. De Valera would readily assent to an election. But he knew well that the people wanted the Treaty and therefore he wanted no election. And he was quite prepared to bring the horrors of war on the country he professed to love, in the hope of establishing his own personal predominance.

But there were officers in the army holding strongly to the republican ideal who shrank from the horrors of civil war. From these a new appeal came for peace, dated the 1st of May, and was in the following terms:

"We, the undersigned officers of the I.R.A., realizing the gravity of the present situation in Ireland and appreciating the fact that, if the present drift is maintained, a conflict of commanders is inevitable, declare that this would be the greatest calamity in Irish history, and would leave Ireland broken for generations.

"To meet this catastrophe, we believe that a closing of the ranks all round is necessary.

"We suggest to all leaders, army and political, and all citizens and soldiers of Ireland, the advisability of a unification of forces, on the basis of the acceptance and utilization of our present national position in the best interests of Ireland, and we require that nothing shall be done that would prejudice our position or dissipate our strength.

"We feel that on this basis alone can the situation best be faced, viz:

"1. The acceptance of the fact, admitted by all sides, that the majority of the people of Ireland are willing to accept the Treaty.

"2. An agreed election with a view to

"3. Forming a Government, which will have the confidence of the whole country.

"4. Army unification on the above basis.

"Signed:— Dan Breen,
Tom Hales,
H. Murphy,
S. O'Hegarty,
F. O'Donoghue,
Sean Boylan,
R. J. Mulcahy,
Owen O'Duffy,
Gearoid O'Sullivan."

Among these signatories, the first six only partially agreed with Mr. O'Connor, and entirely disapproved his unqualified rejection of the Treaty. Nor could they approve of his action in forcibly seizing the Ballast Office at O'Connell Bridge and the Kildare Street Club. This was satisfactory. But an agreed election meant that the existing members of the Dail were not to be opposed; and this was ignoring the people, and denying them the right to have the Government they desired. Nor was unity in an army composed of such discordant elements likely to last. Still the need for peace was so great that the three pro-Treaty officers signed the appeal.

The Dail was then sitting, and though Mr. De Valera had just declared that a minority had rights which it could uphold even by arms, and that there could be no peace unless the question of the Treaty was indefinitely postponed, all the Republican members of the Dail did not agree with him. Among the anti-Treaty army leaders, there was also a moderate and reasonable section, and Mr. O'Hegarty of Cork gave expression to their views before the Dail. He was not a member, but was heard by courtesy of the assembly, and his speech was an urgent plea for moderation and restraint, for the suppression of rivalries and animosities, for unity and strength in the interests of the land

which both sides professed to love. And it made so strong an impression that for the moment the voice of faction was hushed, and even extreme partisans became anxious that a further peace effort should be made. It was therefore agreed that a Committee of the Dail should be appointed, half from the Treaty and half from the anti-Treaty side, and that these, ten in number, should endeavour to discover common ground on which all might take their stand.

The leaders wisely held aloof, as their animosities were more difficult to reconcile than those of the rank and file. But it was of ill omen that Mr. De Valera's representatives were among the most extreme of his followers. Messrs. Moylan, Mellows and Ruttledge always stood out for the Republic; Mrs. Clarke was almost as extreme, and only Mr. Boland could be relied on to strive earnestly for peace. On the Treaty side, Messrs. M'Keown and Hales were tried soldiers, but quite ready to have their swords beaten into ploughshares; while Messrs. Dwyer, O'Malley, and Maginnis were all for peace, though determined to have the Treaty position maintained. This indeed was the difficulty. One side wanted the Republic, the other the Treaty, and it was hard to see how these two positions could be reconciled.

To help the work of appeasement a truce was declared, and for days and sometimes far into the night, the Committee of ten continued its labours. Ultimately, the anti-Treaty members put forward their final proposals:

1. An election to be held, but no issue to be determined by it.
2. A National Coalition Panel of candidates for the Third Dail.
3. This panel to be sent forward by the Sinn Fein organization.
4. The number of candidates to be in proportion to the existing strength of parties in the Dail.
5. Other interests to be free to put forward candidates.
6. Where there was no contest, the sitting members to continue.
7. After the election, there would be a Coalition Government.
8. In the event of the Government losing the confidence of the Dail, there would be a dissolution, with an election on adult suffrage.

Only stern necessity could have induced the Government to seriously consider such proposals. But the necessity for ordered government was so urgent that assent was given to all the conditions except the fourth. It was well known that the country wanted the Treaty, and that if there was a free election few if any of Mr. De Valera's followers would be returned. Nor would there be any peace if this fourth condition were accepted. Mr. De Valera in the new Dail as in the old would be almost equal in strength to his opponents, and there would be the same futile discussions, the same personal recriminations, the same raising of personal issues of which the country was heartily sick. In Mr. De Valera there was no evidence of a change of heart, and even if the necessity of combating anarchy appealed to him, it made no appeal to Mr. O'Connor. Nor was it clear that Mr. De Valera could control Mr. O'Connor, even if he wished.

Yet the Treaty members of the Committee did not altogether reject the fourth condition. They were willing to allow their opponents a proportion of three to five, which would give them forty-eight out of one hundred and twenty-eight members. Under pressure, they went beyond this and would give them a proportion of four to six, which would have raised their number to fifty, thus giving them a position far beyond their strength in the country. But it would have given the Government a good working majority, and, with a Coalition Government, have established settled conditions. The anti-Treaty members of the Committee, however, were adamant. They must continue in their full strength. On this issue, the conference broke down, and the Committee had to report that their efforts only resulted in disagreement.

A final attempt at a settlement was made by Messrs. De Valera and Collins, sitting apart from their followers; and to the surprise of the Dail and of the people outside, an agreement or pact was entered into, and was signed by Messrs. De Valera and Collins. Dated the 20th of May, it was in the following terms:

"We are agreed—

"1. That a National Coalition Panel for the Third Dail, representing both parties in the Dail and in the Sinn Fein organization, be sent forward on the ground that the national position requires the entrusting of the government of the country into the joint hands of those who have been the strength of the national situation during the last few years, without prejudice to their present respective positions.

"2. That the Coalition Panel be sent forward as from the Sinn Fein organization, the number for each party being their present strength in the Dail.

"3. That the candidates be nominated through the agency of the existing Party Executives.

"4. That any and every interest is free to go up and contest the election.

"5. That constituencies where an election is not held shall continue to be represented by their respective Deputies.

"6. That after the election, the Executive shall consist of the President, elected as formerly, the Minister of Defence, representing the army, and nine other Ministers, five from the majority party and four from the minority, each party to choose its own nominees. The allocation will be in the hands of the President.

"7. That, in the event of the Coalition Government finding it necessary to dissolve, a general election will be held as soon as possible."

When the terms of this Pact became public, the friends of the Government everywhere were filled with dismay. Only the previous day, Mr. Griffith had declared in the Dail that those who were trying to blast Ireland's hopes for all time, and bring back the British, were such base traitors as had not been seen since the days of Dermott MacMurrogh. And now Mr. Griffith was repudiated, and the Government had surrendered to the men who in one day had robbed the Irish banks of £100,000,

had raided post offices and even private houses, broke up meetings, destroyed or suppressed newspapers, and insolently declared that the people would not be allowed to declare their wishes at the polls. Mr. De Valera had indeed triumphed, for Mr. Collins had conceded all his demands. Reluctantly and disheartened, Mr. Griffith acquiesced and so did his friends in the Dail, and Mr. Collins, but lately the idol of the people, fell rapidly in public esteem. Only Mr. De Valera and the extremists throughout the country were satisfied and even jubilant. Force had conquered reason, and their opponents had surrendered without striking a blow.

But there were two parties to the Treaty, the British and the Irish, and if the Irish wished to go beyond the terms of the Treaty the British did not. Mr. Churchill, speaking for the Government, soon made this clear. By Article 17, it was provided that each member of the Irish Provisional Government should signify in writing his acceptance of the Treaty. But the Pact provided that four members of the proposed Coalition Government would not conform to this condition. They would be Mr. De Valera's nominees, and their only reason for existence as a separate political party was their rejection of the Treaty. For such men to hold office in a Provisional Government was to strike directly at the provisions of the Treaty; and if Mr. De Valera became a member of such a Government "the Treaty", said Mr. Churchill, "is broken by that very act". The British Parliament had approved of the Treaty by enormous majorities, and had already, with the full sanction of public opinion outside, given its approval the force of law. Mr. Churchill was quite satisfied that the Irish people, equally with the British people, wanted the Treaty; but they were prevented by force from giving intelligible expression to their wishes, and while Mr. De Valera had not 2 per cent of the people behind him, he would have by the Pact almost half the members of the National Assembly.

Mr. Churchill was satisfied that Messrs. Griffith and Collins were acting in good faith, and not at all acting in secret collusion with Mr. De Valera for the establishment of a Republic. He

recognized their difficulties. A handful of fanatics, honest, misguided, determined and well-organized, would have nothing but a Republic, and would allow no other Government to function. Nor would they have friendly relations with the British Empire, except as between two independent nations. Acting with them were a number of sordid ruffians, who cared nothing for the republican ideal, but wanted disorder and anarchy as supplying opportunities for plunder. This combination of idealists and brigands had renewed in its fiercest form the Belfast boycott, brought on reprisals which resulted in the murder of innocent Catholics in Belfast, and thus nullified the arrangement lately arrived at between North and South. Nor could there be any free election in large areas of the Free State, for neither life nor property was secure.

Mr. Churchill had words of scorn for the absence of civic courage in Ireland, where in twenty-six counties only 2 per cent of the people were able to intimidate 98 per cent. "If the democracy of Great Britain, France or the United States had been of so meek and poor a spirit in regard to the management of their own affairs, the liberties of these nations would never have been attained, and, having been attained, would never have been preserved." Nor could he be blamed when he added that the chaos in Ireland was a grave reflection on the Irish Government "which, while urging and pressing continuously for us to withdraw our forces in order to make the whole Irish people see that we were in strict bona fides, has not been able in six months that have elapsed, with all the resources the Treasury would have placed at their disposal, to organize an efficient, adequate police force, capable of maintaining the Treaty position".

The situation was so grave that Messrs. Griffith and Collins were summoned to London, and they came with two of their colleagues, Messrs. Cosgrave and O'Higgins, to consult with the British Ministers. Their honesty was apparent and their difficulties recognized, and they satisfied Messrs. Churchill and Lloyd George that, in spite of the Pact, the Treaty position could be maintained. After all, the Pact provided that other interests

than those provided for in the Sinn Fein Panel were free to enter the lists at the election; and if farmers and labourers were returned, the anti-Treaty party would be correspondingly weakened. Nor would the Treaty have been broken until Mr. De Valera and his friends had become members of the Irish Government. That time had not yet come, and British Ministers would remain hopeful, until hope must necessarily be abandoned.

But Mr. De Valera at all costs must have his triumph. With specious pleas, he had already won over Mr. Collins, and now, no sooner were Mr. Collins's difficulties over in London than he had to face fresh difficulties in Ireland. For there was a further conference with Mr. De Valera and a further surrender. The one clause in the Pact that gave hope of even some degree of freedom at the coming election was the fourth clause: " That any and every interest is free to go up and contest the election equally with the National Sinn Fein Panel ". Mr. Collins regarded this as a reality, but it was clear that Mr. De Valera did not, and he won Mr. Collins's assent to the following manifesto which was issued on June 5th over their joint names:

" The Coalition agreement was unanimously accepted by Dail Eireann and endorsed by the Ard-Fheis of Sinn Fein because in the circumstances it was considered that, in the co-operation which it provided, was the best means of ensuring peaceable ordered government within the nation and of securing it against perils which threatened from without.

" The terms of the agreement explicitly safeguard the rights of all sections of the community, and in view of the fact that one of the most obvious causes of the agreement was the avoidance of electoral contests which cannot fail at the present time to engender bitterness and promote discord and turmoil, the signatories had hoped that the spirit of the Pact would have ensured that such contests would be reduced to a minimum.

" It must be remembered that the country is still in the transition stage, and that to act as if stable conditions had been reached is impossible and in the national interest unsound.

" Many of the dangers which threatened could be met only

by keeping intact the forces which constituted the national resistance in recent years. We are confident that this does not require any further emphasis from us, that the nation will comprehend, and that the spirit which suggests and underlies the agreement will find response from all sections."

This manifesto was rightly described by a good friend of Ireland, Mr. Martin of the *Daily News*, as "an invitation to a section of the I.R.A. to prevent by force the election of Independents", and as "an attempt at election rigging which for sheer effrontery must surely be without parallel in the history of democratic government".[1]

This was the state of things on the eve of the nominations which were fixed for the 6th of June.

[1] *Daily News*, June 6, 1922.

CHAPTER XX

Civil War

On the threshold of the general election, the two most vital requirements of Ireland were a free election and a clear issue on which to vote. The fate of the country was to be decided for all time, and a thoughtless and ill-informed decision might easily mean irreparable disaster.

The Government party, taking their stand on the Treaty, were certainly putting no obstacle in the way of a free election, and were fully conscious that thought and care were necessary for the people when casting their votes. Messrs. Griffith and Collins would have preferred absolute independence for their country, if it were possible. But they found it was not possible, nor had they at any time negotiated for a Republic or for complete independence in any form. They knew well that no negotiations would be held on such a basis. Nor could they, in face of the Government of Ireland Act, compel the Orange counties of Ulster to link their destiny with the rest of Ireland. At the conference in London, they had as practical politicians done their best, securing the best terms they could. And these terms were such as neither O'Connell nor Parnell, the two greatest leaders of the nineteenth century, ever hoped to get, and never would have got. They went before the people with clean hands. If the people were dissatisfied with their conduct, they could give expression to their dissatisfaction in the polling booths; and then these two Irish leaders and their friends would retire from the scene, leaving other men to renew the fight, and perhaps obtain better terms than the Treaty gave from the British Empire.

It was not, then, from the supporters of the Treaty that a clear issue and a free election were imperilled, but from Mr. De Valera and his friends. Mr. O'Connor and his mutinous officers wanted a military dictatorship, and such things as peoples' rights and popular liberty they laughed to scorn. In June these military dictators led Mr. De Valera rather than followed him. But Mr. De Valera himself had little regard for the people's wishes. He listened with approval to his friend, Mr. MacDonogh, T.D., declaring that there could be no election until the last British soldier had left Ireland. On one pretext after another, Mr. De Valera had got the election postponed, not wishing to face an adverse verdict. By such a verdict he would not abide. He was as contemptuous of the people's wishes as was Mr. O'Connor. The people, he said, had no right to go wrong, he himself being the judge of what was right and what was wrong. And he loftily declared, with the air of Louis XIV, that when he wished to know what the Irish people wanted, he looked into his own heart.[1]

But it was in mystifying the electors and confusing the issue at the election that he was at his best. In this department of intellectual effort he was untiring and unscrupulous, and used all the arts of a dishonest politician. In the secret session of Dail Eireann, in July, 1921, he interpreted his oath as "a pledge to the Irish nation to do his best in the interests of the nation", and he did not bind himself to any specific form of settlement. At that date he did not enter into negotiations with Mr. Lloyd George as head of an existing Republic, for the British Prime Minister had made it plain that Ireland must be included in the British Empire. Nor did Mr. De Valera, when he put forward his plan of external association with the British Empire, ask for an independent Republic. For a State recognizing the King of England as Head of the Associated States of the British Commonwealth and paying him a yearly subsidy was not an independent Republic. Yet, in June, 1922, Mr. De Valera told the people at public meetings that it was. And when the inaccuracy of his statement was shown, he abandoned Document No. 2, and took

[1] O'Higgins, *Irish Civil War*, p. 43.

his stand on the rock of the Republic, as if he had stipulated for a Republic in the negotiations of the previous years.

If he was asked, as he often was, how he would proceed to get an independent Republic, he equivocated and shifted his ground. One of the ablest men on the Treaty side enumerated the hard facts that had to be faced. England was the greatest naval power and one of the greatest military powers in the world, and, if the Treaty was cast aside and the war renewed, there was not much chance of an Irish victory. England had hitherto put down Irish rebellion, and Mr. De Valera did not explain how Ireland could succeed now, when England had millions of trained men at her disposal. The Treaty had been signed by five Irish plenipotentiaries sent to London to do their best for Ireland, and it had been ratified by Dail Eireann, the elected Parliament of the people. And when Mr. De Valera was asked if he proposed to disown the plenipotentiaries, defy the Dail, and flout the people, he refused to give a straight answer, and took refuge in some nebulous hypothesis.

When he came to describe the terms given by the Treaty he was equally vague, and was ready to stoop to equivocation and untruth. To accept it, he said, would be to betray the living and dishonour the dead. But he forgot that it gave explicitly the status of Canada, and he equally forgot or ignored what his special friend, Mr. Childers, had said about the status of Canada. "It is by the full admission of British statesmen equal in status to Great Britain, and as free as Great Britain." "The Crown has no authority in Canada; it signifies sentiment only." "The Dominions are not subordinate dependencies but free nations." Mr. De Valera ought surely to have respect for the words of Mr. Childers who was a master of his subject, and if his description of Canada was true, then Ireland, with the status of Canada, had travelled far since the days of Sir Hamar Greenwood and the Black and Tans.[1]

The half-educated visionaries who confounded a Republic with liberty, the beardless boys who shouted at meetings or

[1] O'Higgins, *Irish Civil War*, pp. 18–20.

blocked roads, and the hysterical girls associated with them were not satisfied that enough progress had been made. But the men and women of experience were quite satisfied and wanted the Treaty; and it was because Mr. De Valera was well aware of this that he had recourse to the Pact so as to stifle the people's wishes. He wanted a machined election, and the manifesto which followed the Pact was a plain warning to Independent candidates to keep away from the electoral battle-field. As such it was interpreted by the armed Irregulars, and when a non-Panel candidate was put forward he was solemnly warned that he was courting serious danger. Many were thus intimidated. A candidate in Carlow was fired at and wounded; a candidate in Mayo was forcibly kept away from the nomination; and in many instances, there was personation on a shameful scale, as an adjunct to shameful violence.

On the Treaty side there was much moral cowardice. The Panel candidates, for the most part, disliked the Pact, and realized that in carrying out its terms they were flouting the people; but they acquiesced because it was the line of least resistance. They were sometimes ready even to curry favour with the Irregulars, and to urge that no Independent candidates should be put forward, thus allowing the most objectionable factionists to be returned. Mr. De Valera and his chief supporters were highly pleased, and especially when they found men like Messrs. Collins and Mulcahy on their platform, appealing to the Pact and deprecating independent opposition. Mr. Griffith, who disliked the arrangement intensely, held aloof from all such handshaking in public. The people had hard words everywhere for Mr. Collins. But they did not sufficiently appreciate his difficulties. He was fighting with unscrupulous and desperate men, and the Pact was the last chance of averting the horrors of civil war. But though he stood on Mr. De Valera's platform and commended the Panel candidates to the electors, he was not unmindful of the people's wishes, and at Cork, only two days before the election, he spoke out. " You are facing an election here on Friday," he said, " and I am not hampered now by being on a platform where there are

Coalitionists, and I can make a straight appeal to you, the citizens of Cork, to vote for the candidates you think best of, whom the electors of Cork think will carry on best in the future the work that they want carried on." This appeal was quite understood by the people who, in spite of all the intimidation, had Independent candidates before them. Farmers were not in every case driven off by armed men, and the spirit of Mr. Gorry was admired when he fired on the men who attacked his house, and in spite of them went to the poll. In cities, such as Dublin and Cork, the Labour Party was well organized, and disregarded all the menaces of the Irregulars; and there were Independents, neither farmers nor labourers, who were men of courage.

The result was a crushing defeat for Mr. De Valera. Out of forty-one of his Panel candidates only nineteen were returned. In Dublin City, every anti-Treaty candidate went down except one, and he was at the bottom of the poll. In Cork City, the anti-Treaty candidates were also vanquished. In Kildare, Mr. Childers, the chief adviser of Mr. De Valera, got but a few hundred votes, while his opponents got thousands. Mr. Robinson, one of the first of the army leaders to repudiate the Dail, and Mr. Mellows, one of the chiefs in the Four Courts, were among the slain. Disapproval of the women's attitude on the Treaty was so emphatic that four of the six women candidates were rejected. Mrs. O'Callaghan was returned in Limerick because there was no contest; and Miss MacSweeney would not have been elected in Cork if she had not got Treaty votes under the system of proportional representation. Had there been a contest in Clare, Mr. De Valera would certainly not have been returned, and had there been contests in Kerry, Limerick, Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim, these counties would have followed the lead of Clare.

Intimidation kept many absent from the polls; but in spite of intimidation, large numbers polled, their anxiety being to put out those who opposed the Treaty. Hence there were farmers and labourers and independents returned, not because of any personal merits, or because of the special views they advocated, but because they supported the Treaty. The Labour Party

returned seventeen out of eighteen of their candidates; the Farmers returned seven; the Independents ten, not one of these declaring against the Treaty. Had they done so, they would have shared the fate of Messrs. Childers and Mellows. On the other hand, the prominent defenders of the Treaty, such as Messrs. Griffith, Collins, and Mulcahy, headed the polls with record majorities. Had there been a really free election, and the old system of voting instead of proportional representation, it is quite certain that Mr. De Valera's party would not have numbered ten. Even with the prevailing conditions, his party numbered only thirty-six in a Parliament of one hundred and twenty-eight. The official Treaty Party, it is true, were only fifty-eight, but as the Farmers, Labourers, and Independents were on the Treaty side, the figures were for the Treaty ninety-two, against thirty-six.

Mr. De Valera's calculations were that he would have been almost equal to Mr. Collins, and could make the Treaty position impossible. The mutinous officers were less artful and more frank, and did not conceal their purpose of establishing a Republic by force. They were not averse to the Pact because it would help to defeat the Treaty; but they had no sympathy with Mr. De Valera's undertaking to establish order, and, in spite of the Pact, they continued to harass the people under the pretence of enforcing the boycott of Belfast. Robberies continued; trains from Belfast were attacked; shops were looted; and the inevitable result followed of further shocking murders of Catholics in Belfast. The mutineers also continued to occupy the Four Courts, and to commandeer goods for their support. They endeavoured also to corrupt the Free State army, and on the night of June 18, Irregular officers from the Four Courts proceeded to Kildare in an armoured car, to the Civic Guard depot. Failing to seduce the guards, they arrested several soldiers and civic guards and returned to Dublin with all the arms which the depot contained.

Meanwhile, the Constitution of the Free State, for which Mr. De Valera had been clamouring so loudly, had seen the light of day. The Treaty, it was said, was a betrayal of Ireland, and the Constitution would complete and perpetuate the be-

trayal. It would give permanent recognition to the subject and even servile status of Ireland, rivet more firmly than ever the British fetters on her limbs, admit formally that all power in Ireland was derived from an English source. Under such a Constitution, Ireland would be unable to develop along Irish lines, and would be nothing more than a poor copy of England, her liberty restricted, her outlook narrowed, her desire for national expression impossible of attainment.

At the sight of the Constitution these prophets of evil ought to have been confounded. In its first clause it was declared that all power came from the people, legislative, executive, and judicial. The Irish Free State was a co-equal member of the community of nations forming the British Commonwealth of nations, placed on an equality with Canada, and, as such, no longer a mere subject province but a nation. Irish was declared the national language, and henceforth, if only the people wished it, Irish art could be encouraged and Irish history studied in Irish schools. Nor would it be necessary any longer to edit its textbooks in accordance with British prejudices, nor forget the saints who prayed for Ireland, nor the soldiers who fought and died for her freedom. The right of free expression and of free education in elementary schools was guaranteed to all; and as there could be no religion privileged by law, neither could any penalties be imposed for religious belief. In the most complete manner the people would be their own masters. For the Dail, there was adult suffrage, for the Senate a vote for all beyond thirty years of age, and those who could vote could also sit in these assemblies, if elected. The Executive Council appointed by Parliament would be responsible to it; and Parliament controlled the police, the army, the judiciary, and taxation. Nor could it be dissolved except on the advice of the Executive Council. In certain cases, provision was made for a referendum, and there was the same arrangement for vetoing legislation as in Canada, where the power of the veto had shrunk to a shadow. The Constitution must conform to the Treaty and there was an oath of true faith and allegiance " to the Constitution of the Irish Free State and of fidelity to the

British King in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain". There was a Governor-General representing the King, who had, however, as little power to interfere with legislation as the British King had over the British Parliament.

Mr. De Valera was less concerned with the defects of the Constitution than with turning Mr. Collins out of office, and after the election he complained that faith had not been kept with him, that the terms of his Pact with Mr. Collins had been broken. He resented that its fourth clause had been taken seriously, that any Independent candidates had come forward, and still more that the people had voted for them. He had already maintained that the people had no right to go wrong, and that he was to be the judge of what was wrong. He was, therefore, disgusted with the election results, and would not accept the verdict.

Nor would the mutinous officers in the Four Courts. They continued their commandeering of goods, their occupation of public buildings, and their enforcement of the Belfast boycott. The Orange bravoes continued to retort with the murder of innocent Catholics through the six north-east counties, and at the end of June the position of the Belfast Catholics was as pitiable as that of the Armenians under Turkish rule. The British Government became impatient at the inaction of the Free State authorities, and it became plain that Mr. Collins should either put down the Irregulars or abdicate; and when these Irregulars forcibly seized a garage in Dublin, they were driven out by Free State troops, and their leader arrested. This was on Tuesday, 27th of June. That same night, the Free State Assistant Chief of Staff, General O'Connell, was arrested in the streets of Dublin by the Irregulars and lodged a prisoner in the Four Courts. His release was demanded, and as this demand was rejected, the Government guns opened fire on the Irregulars' positions in the city at four o'clock in the morning of 28th of June. At last the period of suspense was over, and the long threatened civil war had begun.

As an explanation of its action, the Government issued the following proclamation:

" Since the close of the General Election, at which the will of the people of Ireland was ascertained, further grave acts against security of person and property have been committed in Dublin and in some other parts of Ireland by persons pretending to act with authority.

" It is the duty of the Government to which the people have entrusted their defence and the conduct of their affairs to protect and secure all law-respecting citizens without distinction, and that duty the Government will resolutely perform.

" Yesterday, one of the principal garages in the Metropolis was raided and plundered under the pretext of a Belfast boycott. No such boycott has any legal existence, and if it had, it could not authorize or condone the action of irresponsible persons in seizing private property.

" Later in the same evening, Lieut.-General O'Connell, Assistant Chief of Staff, was seized by some of the persons responsible for the plundering of the garage, and is still held in their hands.

" Outrages such as these against the nation and the Government must cease at once and for ever.

" For some months past, all classes of business in Ireland have suffered severely through the feeling of insecurity engendered by reckless and wicked acts which have tarnished the reputation of Ireland abroad.

" As one disastrous consequence, unemployment and distress are prevalent in the country at a time when, but for such acts, Ireland would be humming with prosperity.

" The Government is determined that the country shall no longer be held up from the pursuit of its normal life and the establishment of its free national institutions.

" It calls therefore on the citizens to co-operate actively with it in measures it is taking to ensure the public safety and to secure Ireland for the Irish people."

Much was made by the Irregulars of the speech delivered in the British Parliament two days previously. Voicing the impatience of his Government at the inactivity of the Provisional

Government in face of so many lawless acts, Mr. Churchill plainly foreshadowed British intervention if peaceful citizens were to be left at the mercy of Mr. Rory O'Connor and his colleagues in the Four Courts. But the Provisional Government had already resolved to act. The general election showed that the people wanted the Treaty and wanted peace, and there could be no peace until Mr. O'Connor was put down. If Mr. Collins was unwilling to act he must abdicate and this he had no intention of doing. Fortified by the approval of the people, and with the resources of the country at his back, he felt quite able to repress armed disorders. Nor did he accept the proffer of English troops, which would be readily placed at his disposal, but was content to rely entirely on Irish arms and Irish valour.

When hostilities began, the Irregulars held the Four Courts, as well as the Clarence Hotel by the river, Banba Hall and Fowler Hall in Parnell Square, Barry's Hotel in Denmark Street, Moran's Hotel in Talbot Street, and Hughes's Hotel in Lower Gardiner Street. The Communists became their allies, and had their headquarters in North Great George's Street fortified; while another body held possession of the Sackville Club on the Henry Street side of O'Connell Street. There were, in addition, many individuals or small groups scattered over the city, who, dressed as civilians and often in concealed positions, sniped at the National troops passing along the streets. They were armed with revolvers and rifles, and in some cases bombs. But the main position was the Four Courts, where there were armoured cars, machine-guns, and an abundance of rifles and ammunition for the three hundred men who occupied the building. The space around had been trenched and protected by barbed wire and the doors and windows stopped with furniture and law books. The building itself was strong, and the calculations of the defenders were that it could not be captured except by using heavy artillery, which would reduce the whole place to ruins.

Even this must be done, and the National troops from across the river opened fire with two eighteen-pounder guns, throwing explosive shells. Fowler Hall was also invested and in a few

hours took fire. But here no explosive shells were used, and the fire was soon extinguished, and by one o'clock the building was evacuated by the Irregulars, who escaped by the rear and joined their friends in the occupied hotels. An aeroplane, with bombing apparatus, circled over the Four Courts, but was not brought into action. The eighteen-pounders, however, kept busy, and all day the boom of these heavy guns with the sharp reports of machine-guns and the crackle of rifle fire was heard. The rebels, however, held grimly to their citadel, and showed no willingness to surrender, even when the south gate had been blown in and part of the great doors smashed to atoms. But they could only delay, not prevent, the capture of the Four Courts.

On Thursday night a breach made on the eastern side admitted the National troops, the central hall was occupied and thirty-three of the Irregulars surrendered. The remainder fell back to the buildings at the rear, and in some places the opposing forces inside were only fifteen yards apart. The whole of the buildings were then surrounded by the attacking force of two thousand, and early on Friday morning an attack in force was made by General O'Daly. In preparation the eighteen-pounders and even a sixty-pounder, aided by machine-guns, sent forth their messages of destruction and death. The eastern and southern sides of the Four Courts were further battered and breached, and at eight o'clock, the troops, cutting the barbed wire and throwing hand-grenades, entered in strong force. There was some reply from the Irregulars' rifles and machine-guns, and some hand-to-hand encounters, but the defenders were compelled to give way. Rory O'Connor was summoned to surrender, but seemed unable to make up his mind, and the National troops disconnected some mines and advanced from the central hall. At this time—it was 12.30—a land mine was discovered and an engineer advanced to disconnect but was shot down, a second engineer faring similarly. The mine was then fired by the Irregulars, and of the fifty National troops in the hall few escaped. Some were killed, the remainder wounded.

About 2 p.m., Father Albert, who had been with the Irre-

gulars, came out to ask terms, but no terms would be given except unconditional surrender, and the fight went on. Fire had then broken out in many places. The fine Law Library was a seething cauldron; the various courts and offices were soon in the grip of the advancing flames; ammunition dumps and mines exploded, and the National troops, to escape being burned, evacuated the building. It was, however, still covered by their guns. Every avenue of escape for the besieged was cut off, and at 3.45 Mr. Ernest O'Malley, the Irregular Commander, and 130 men, including Messrs. O'Connor and Mellows, laid down their arms. They were marched to Bow Lane Distillery, and that night they were safely housed in Mountjoy Prison.

They left the Four Courts a sightless ruin, its walls battered with shells, its doors and windows gone, its arches down, its pillars twisted out of shape; the great copper dome was no more; the statues of Moses, flanked on one side by Mercy and on the other by Justice, had fallen from their pedestals; the valuable library was gone; and the halls, which so often resounded to the eloquence of O'Connell and Butt and Whiteside and many more, were blotted out of existence. The greatest loss of all was the priceless collection of the Record Office. Covering a period of six centuries, there were charters of cities and towns, Crown grants of lands, title deeds to estates, decrees of civil and ecclesiastical courts, original wills and proclamations—priceless materials of Irish history which by no possibility could be replaced. All these had perished in the flames.

The architectural beauty of the Four Courts and the National Archives contained within its walls would have appealed to men of culture. But there were few such among the armed occupants in the rebellion. Messrs. O'Malley and O'Connor had passed through a university, and though Mr. Mellows had not, he was a man of education and could write and speak well. Others, even among the leaders, had little education and less common sense, and had neither care for the future nor veneration for the past. They occupied the Four Courts because its defences, except against artillery, were strong, and they sheltered themselves

behind its priceless treasures in the hope that these treasures would be spared, forgetful of the fact that a nation's life was in peril, and that a nation without archives was more valuable than archives without a nation. Of the rank and file the great majority were thoughtless youths trapped by more designing men, and reckless of what the morrow might bring. Among the prisoners it was discovered that nineteen were between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, mere children inveigled to danger and death. Not a few in the Four Courts and in the occupied hotels were noted ruffians, who never had any connection with the I.R.A., and in one hotel were several common thieves masquerading as rebel Republicans. Many of these surrendered when the Four Courts fell; and on the same day there were important captures of rebels in Drogheda and in Tirconnell.[1]

But the trouble was not yet over, and Mr. De Valera was determined that it should not be as long as Messrs. Griffith and Collins were at the helm, and as long as he himself was not President of an Irish Republic. Ireland was to be sacrificed, while this phantom was pursued. No sooner had the Four Courts fallen than Mr. De Valera himself, with several armed followers, took forcible possession of the Gresham, Hammam, and Granville Hotels in O'Connell Street, and the Tramway Office in the same street. They came in small parties and at short intervals, driving out the occupants, took over all the food supplies and barricaded the doors and windows. They could not hope to repel the attack which had shattered the Four Courts; but they could destroy private property and dislocate the traffic of the city, and this, they calculated, would discredit and perhaps destroy their opponents. Nothing was left to the Government but to open fire with their heavy guns and to shell the new positions occupied. This was done with vigour, and on Wednesday, July 5, the Hammam and Gresham Hotels were in ruins, and their occupants prisoners. Late in the evening, the last stand was made in the Granville Hotel and here Mr. Cathal Brugha was in command. He had fought with desperate valour throughout, and ordered

[1] Official Government Report.

his men to surrender when the building was in flames. But he would not surrender himself, and after his men had hoisted the white flag and marched out, he emerged from the burning building, holding a revolver in each hand. "Stop, for God's sake," said a Red Cross man, but he still advanced unheeding repeated cries to halt. At last a volley of shot rang out, and he fell, mortally wounded. He was a brave man, but a mischievous influence in Irish politics, and had he lived he would have always been with the extremists, scorning compromise and hating England to the last.

With characteristic cunning, Mr. De Valera escaped long before the final surrender. It was said he made his way through a tunnel at the rear of the Gresham Hotel, and was quite safe, when Mr. Brugha, a braver man, received his death wound. He had, however, succeeded in sacrificing much property and the lives of many brave men. The whole eastern side of Upper O'Connell Street was a smoking and blackened ruin. Many houses also on the opposite side of the street had been destroyed, while Marlboro Street and Earl Street, though suffering less, had not escaped. Property worth more than five millions had been destroyed; nearly one hundred lives had been lost, and nearly three hundred persons wounded; and the destruction of so many hotels and the dislocation of so much business had brought unemployment to many and hunger into many a home.

A national call for volunteers met with a ready response. The army had done well, and by the end of the second week of the war not only was Dublin cleared of Irregulars, except for an occasional sniper, but the Government was able to announce that Boyle had been captured after three days' fighting; Roscommon, Longford, Westmeath, and Sligo counties were securely held; and important captures had been made at Maynooth, Navan, Kildare, and Blessington in Wicklow. There were, however, large areas still held by the Irregulars, and these must be dealt with as a first necessity of the national situation. Parliament, which was to meet on July 15, was further prorogued to the 29th of the same month. By that time, it was hoped, the power of the Irregulars

would be broken, and discussion would take the place of military action in the nation's affairs.

As the military situation dominated all others, a war council was appointed in the middle of July, having supreme control of all military operations. It consisted of three, Messrs. Collins, Mulcahy and O'Duffy, all having the rank of generals. General Collins was Commander-in-Chief, General Mulcahy, Minister of Defence, and General O'Duffy in supreme command of the South-western Division. Announcing these changes, the Government issued a proclamation that the fight was " for the revival of the nation, for the free expression and effective execution of the people's will ". The people must rule, and an insolent, armed minority seeking to impose its will by force must be put down if the nation was not to perish.

All Mayo was then in rebel hands, a portion of Sligo, a small part of Roscommon and the greater part of Galway. Over this extensive territory their power was unquestioned and their insolence hard to endure. They commandeered goods at will, robbed banks and post offices, blocked roads. These things were done, they declared, so as to impede the advance of the hated Free State army; but they were done long before the national army began to move west, and the effect was to harass non-combatants. Fairs and markets were spoiled, traffic seriously impeded, and in not a few cases men and women, especially the feeble, were unable to attend Mass on Sundays.

These rebels were liberal in threats towards the enemy, announcing that they would defend the positions they held to the last. No Free State forces would capture the towns held except over the dead bodies of the Republican defenders. These empty threats proved to be but a poor substitute for valour, and it soon appeared how inferior in soldierly qualities was the armed mob which had so long held the west under its iron heel. At Boyle and Coolooney alone was there anything like effective resistance. Both places, however, fell: Boyle after a struggle of three days; and Coolooney after a hard fought battle of four hours. Elsewhere it was flight rather than fight. Castlerea and Ballin-

lough fell after a single shell was thrown from an eighteen-pounder, and many prisoners were taken. The fugitives passed rapidly to Ballyhannis, Claremorris, and Ballinrobe, burning the barracks as they retreated. A landing from the sea struck terror into the rebels at Westport, and Castlebar was hurriedly evacuated, but not until buildings had been destroyed worth £200,000. Newport and Ballina did no better than Westport and Castlebar. In Galway County, Tuam was evacuated, but Connemara remained in rebel hands. Their only exploit there was to burn down the Marconi Station at Clifden, throwing hundreds of poor people out of work.

Before the end of July every town of importance in Connaught was in the hands of the National troops. The Irregulars, leaving a trail of fire after them, were hiding in the hills, still armed and still preying on the defenceless people.

In Munster the struggle was more severe. Early in the month, large bodies of Irregulars from Kerry and Cork had entered Limerick, occupied military and police barracks, seized hotels, factories and private houses, suppressed the newspapers and freely commandeered goods of all kinds. They were under the command of Mr. Liam Lynch, who, but a few days before, had been arrested by National troops in Dublin, but released because he expressed disapproval of the rebellion. Now he was at the head of the Limerick rebels, and with him were Messrs. Childers and De Valera. They had abundance of rifles, revolvers, and machine-guns, as well as mines and grenades, some armoured cars, and they blocked all roads leading to the city. General Brennan, however, was a brave and resourceful leader, and with inferior forces held his ground. He was strongly reinforced, and as rifles and machine-guns and even armoured cars were insufficient, he had heavy guns turned on the Irregulars' positions. This proved decisive; one by one the rebel positions were evacuated or stormed, and many of the rebels were killed or wounded, or taken prisoners. The remainder, numbering about one thousand, escaped from the city in a southerly direction, leaving the fine barracks in the city in ruins.

What was the character of some of these rebel leaders we learn from orders issued by them. In Clare, the commander told his men: " Don't spare any officer or man in the Free State army ". Near Athenry in Galway, the funeral of a National soldier was ambushed by a Mr. Duggan, and the officer in charge was shot dead. In Kilkenny, the leader ordered his men to " commandeer labour, working day and night to make all roads impassable. The man who does not obey must receive the extreme penalty."

Limerick fell on the 2nd of July, and the same day General Prout crossed the Suir and captured Waterford, taking one hundred prisoners. At Kilmallock, under Mr. Childers, the rebels made a determined stand; but General Murphy, who commanded the National troops, broke the rebel resistance, not, however, without severe fighting and heavy losses on both sides. Superior numbers and equipment were ensuring victory, and by the end of the month, all Tipperary and Limerick were cleared of the rebels. General Prout, moving west towards Dungarvan and Youghal, was driving the enemy before him to Cork and to the mountains, and in the first week of August, Government vessels landed troops at Cork and captured the city. A few days later, Kenmare was also captured by National troops, also landed from the sea. Messrs. De Valera and Childers, always together, had been traced to Clonmel and Cork, and when the latter city fell, they burned all the barracks, and fled for shelter to the mountains of North Cork. So far Parliament had not met, but General Collins was now so satisfied with the progress made that he thought it might safely meet. The rebels were beaten and Parliament was summoned to meet on the 20th of August.

It was at this date that the country was shocked to hear that Mr. Arthur Griffith was dead. Short of stature, with a well-knit frame, he ought to have lived much longer, for he had only passed his fiftieth year. But the hardships of imprisonment and the constant worry during the regime of the Black and Tans prepared the way for disease, and the disease had come with the last sad year of his life. Willingly he had spent himself in the work of

the London Conference, and felt that the Treaty was the crowning of his life work. But the instrument which gave Ireland her lost freedom was attacked as a betrayal, and Griffith himself was assailed as Ireland's betrayer. Satisfied that he had done well and that the masses of the people were behind him, he doggedly defended his position and saved the liberties he had won. Yet he felt sick at heart at being calumniated by those whom he had set free, and the accusations of treachery hurled at him by old friends were hurtful and hard to bear, even though the accusers were the meaner spirits among his old colleagues.

Worse still was the thought of the evils that were to come to the country he loved so well. He knew Mr. De Valera intimately, his reckless disregard of consequences, where his own vanity and ambition were concerned, his influence over the young and unthinking. With such a leader and such followers, the civil war entered on might, he feared, be bitter and prolonged, and might end in national disaster. The thought that all might be lost, that the English might return, finding Ireland broken and helpless at their feet, and with the whole world pointing to the Irish as the authors of their own ruin, darkened and clouded his days and nights, undermined his strength and health and prematurely ended a noble career.

Just then, his loss was a stunning blow. The country was never more in need of wise guidance, and there was something like despair when the people realized that his skilful hand was no longer at the helm. Of leaders who could indulge in idle boasts and empty platitudes, Ireland had enough and to spare, as she always had in the past. But a leader such as Griffith she had not known. Wanting the eloquence of Grattan, he would never have allowed, as Grattan did, the disbandment of the Volunteers before Parliament had been reformed. It is certain that Griffith could never have aroused the enthusiasm which carried emancipation. But it is certain that he would not, like O'Connell, have manned his party with relatives and personal adherents who were of little service to Ireland and did little credit to O'Connell. In foresight, in dogged tenacity, in firmness of purpose which nothing could

shake, in perseverance amid defeat, in patience in waiting for success, he resembled Parnell. Like Parnell, he was unemotional and imperturbable, with a poor opinion of mere rhetoricians in the domain of practical politics. Unlike Parnell, he was not of the upper classes, and had never passed through a university. He was born poor and had little more than a primary education in his youth. Yet, while compelled to earn his bread, he educated himself and was a highly educated man. Of Ireland his knowledge was intimate and profound. Its history, its antiquities, its topography, its material resources, its trials, its triumphs, and its defeats were as familiar to him as the alphabet to the schoolboy. The various journals which he founded and edited became the receptacle of his knowledge, and week after week his thoughts were poured forth in a style that was vigorous and manly, and clear as the limpid stream. With no hankering for popularity, his desire was to educate and instruct, and the zeal and courage with which he did this was an inspiration to others and a heritage to after times. He had got tempting offers from foreign newspapers but he had no desire to be rich, and would not leave his own country, and though he died poor his work was done, and he was the first President of a free Ireland.

Before his body, placed in the City Hall, appropriately near the statue of O'Connell, which was draped in mourning, thousands of Irishmen marched in mournful procession. Messages of condolence came from the Pope, from the British King, from the consuls of foreign nations representing their governments. In the harbours the vessels of all nations had lowered their flags. Round his coffin stood the armed soldiers of the country he had set free, and a cavalry escort of Irish officers accompanied his remains to Glasnevin. Bishops, priests, members of the National Assembly, of the National University, of corporations and county councils, of labour and literary associations, followed the hearse, and in the streets of Dublin hundreds of thousands were silent and mournful spectators of the funeral procession. If a whole nation paid tribute to its lost leader never was tribute better deserved. Other Irish chiefs, even such great men as O'Connell

and Parnell, had but partially succeeded; but Griffith's dreams had been realized, for his efforts had made Ireland free.

General Collins was then in Limerick, where he met with an enthusiastic reception. Cork and Clonmel, Mallow, Kinsale and Kenmare had already fallen, and the Commander-in-Chief was so satisfied of an early and complete victory that he announced the early calling together of Parliament. His grief for Mr. Griffith was profound, and he lamented that there seemed to be a " malignant fate dogging the fortunes of Ireland, for at every critical period of her history the man whom the country trusts and follows is taken from her ". For the moment his military duties were laid aside and he hastened to Dublin to pay the last mark of respect to his departed friend. Nor was there anyone in the funeral procession more admired by the spectators than the soldierly figure in his uniform of Commander-in-Chief. He did not, however, delay in Dublin, and when Arthur Griffith was laid to rest in Glasnevin, General Collins again went to Munster to inspect and encourage his troops, and hasten the hour of final triumph. " I shall not retire," he said, " from my military duties until the trouble is ended. The Government has given me a job to perform and that job will be carried out to the best of my ability."

On the 22nd of August he was in Cork and on that morning left the city to inspect the military positions in South Cork. He was escorted by an armoured car and had with him about twenty men of the Head-quarters Staff, among them his special friends, General O'Connell and General Dalton. It was an entirely insufficient escort for a Commander-in-Chief, who knew well that his life was sought, and especially in a county swarming with Irregulars who knew the locality intimately and would be likely to attack from some well-chosen position. This is just what happened. At Bealnablath (the Pass of Blooms) situated between Macroom and Bandon, a party of two hundred lay in wait, and as General Collins's little force came up, fire was opened on them from the neighbouring heights. The advance dispatch-rider was seriously wounded in the first onslaught. But General Collins

and the others vigorously replied with their rifles and machine-guns, and the Irregulars were already in flight when a bullet struck the Commander-in-Chief, killing him almost instantly. He died in the arms of General Dalton, muttering a word of forgiveness for those who had killed him. The body was then taken in the armoured car to Cork, where the party arrived at midnight; and when the news was flashed over the wires on the following morning, not only Cork but all Ireland was filled with horror. To be killed by the British whom he fought with such determination might be expected, but to fall by the bullet of some brother Irishman, for whose liberty he had so often imperilled his life, was indeed a strange recompense, demonstrating, and not for the first time, the danger often strewn on an Irish patriot's path.

Idolized by the army, there was danger that the soldiers he led and loved might take their own way of avenging his death, and that the treachery of the Cork Irregulars might be paid for by the fall of many of their chiefs. It was the fear of such reprisals that caused General Mulcahy to send the following message to the army:

" To the men of the Army.

" Stand calmly to your posts.

" Bend bravely and undaunted to your work.

" Let no cruel act of reprisal blemish your bright honour.

" Every dark hour that Michael Collins met since 1916 seemed but to steel that bright strength of his and temper his gay bravery. You are left each inheritors of that strength and of that bravery.

" To each of you falls his unfinished work. No darkness in this hour, no loss of comrades will daunt you at it.

" Ireland, the army serves, strengthened by its sorrow."

This appeal was needed. There was talk in many a barrack of swift and terrible vengeance on the friends of those who had laid the young chieftain low, and if hot-headed young officers and soldiers had broken out, with arms in their hands, on that

August night much blood would have been shed. But General Mulcahy's appeal was heeded. Soldiers in Dublin and elsewhere were confined to barracks; time was given for reason to assert itself and for angry passions to subside, and the thoughts of soldiers and civilians alike were turned to honour the memory of the gallant dead.

In this direction nothing was wanting. In Cork the anger of the people was only exceeded by their sorrow. The shops were closed, all business suspended, all the ships in the river had lowered their flags, and as the remains were borne to the waiting ship on the Lee the grief of the thousands along the route was unrestrained. Guarded by officers and soldiers who loved him well, the dead chief was carried by sea to be buried as he wished with the Dublin Guards who had already found a resting-place in Glasnevin. It was midnight when the transport loomed out of the darkness; but, late as the hour was, there were thousands waiting, and as the gun-carriage conveying the remains passed through the streets of Dublin, the midnight silence was broken by many a sob. The lying in state in the City Hall was a repetition of what took place the previous week when men came to gaze for the last time on the features of Arthur Griffith. The numbers, however, were greater now, for General Collins was more of a popular hero. Mr. Griffith, too, had died in middle age, when it might be said his life work was done. But General Collins was only in his thirtieth year, in the full vigour of youthful manhood, and with his work for Ireland yet incomplete.

Monday, the 28th of August, was declared by the Government a day of national mourning. In Dublin all business was suspended throughout the day; outside of Dublin from 11 a.m. till midday. It was the hour at which in the pro-Cathedral in Marlboro Street High Mass was being said. Nor has that church ever been filled by a more remarkable throng. From all parts of Ireland they were come to pay respect to the memory of an Irish General who fell fighting for Ireland, and who now lay before the high altar in the full uniform of an Irish Commander-in-Chief. A bishop was celebrant of the Mass; eight bishops and more than

three hundred priests were in the Church and walked in the funeral procession; the members of the Government, the chiefs of the army and police, members of the Dail, representatives of the Universities, of literary societies, of county and district councils, swelled the throng. So dense was the mass of people who lined the route along which the funeral procession passed that it was computed to number 300,000 persons. The floral tributes were so numerous that twelve motors were required to convey them. Nor was any scene during the day more affecting than the placing on the coffin of a single white lily from the afflicted girl who was the dead chief's destined bride. No such tribute of national mourning had been paid to an Irish leader since the funeral of O'Connell.

Nor was the regret for the dead nor the expressions of esteem confined to Ireland. Those who were but lately his bitterest enemies had learned to respect him and had a kindly word for him now. General Macready deplored the loss to the Government and the nation. Lord Birkenhead was profoundly shocked. "Every friend of the settlement," he said, "will read of this outrage with heavy hearts." Mr. Churchill expressed the sorrow he felt at the loss of a man of dauntless courage, inspired by intense devotion to his country's cause. Mr. Lloyd George was equally emphatic. "I am inexpressibly sad at the news of the death of the gallant young Irishman. His engaging personality won friendships even amongst those who first met him as foes, and to all who met him, the news of his death comes as a personal sorrow." From Australia and America came many messages of sympathy. The French President sent the condolences of his Government, as did the Belgian Foreign Minister on behalf of his Government, adding an expression of its deep indignation at the odious outrage. The consular flags of other nations were lowered, as were those of the vessels in the harbour. For the moment even Orange bigotry was softened, and more than one kindly message came from Belfast. The outlaw of 1920 had become the patriot of 1922, and if the shipyard workers admired the courage of the rebel and the fighter, the industrial chiefs of

the big city appreciated the efforts that the young statesman was making to bring North and South together.

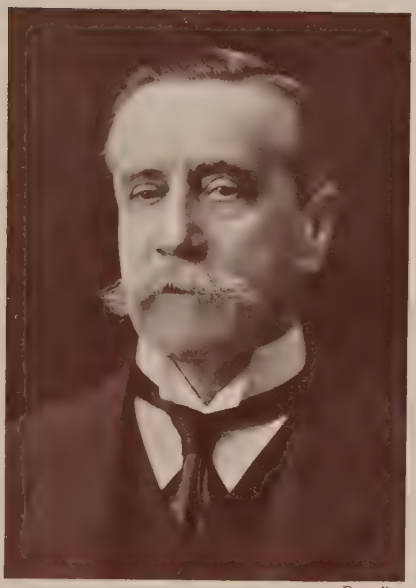
Among the men of his own race and faith there was heart-breaking sorrow. Going from his native Cork to London, he entered a Government office when a boy; but though his body was in the city by the Thames, his spirit was in Cork, and all his love was for Ireland. He associated with Irish, learned Irish, took part in Irish games, and on the eve of the rebellion of 1916, he came back to Dublin to fight for the land he loved best. In the rebellion he was not one of the leaders; but his boundless energy, his versatility, his organizing capacity, his ability to do everything well soon brought him into prominence, and during the Greenwood regime, he was England's most formidable foe. He raised a loan for the Republic and safeguarded the money obtained, he organized the forces against coercion, he was head of the Intelligence Department, and in resource and daring far exceeded the most expert detectives whom the Government employed. While Government agents were constantly on his track, he walked through the streets of Dublin, stayed in Dublin houses, dined in Dublin hotels, and sometimes watched the Black and Tans searching houses for himself. He even went into Dublin Castle disguised as a coal porter and came away with valuable information. Without him the resistance to Greenwood's terror would probably have collapsed. He kept up the drooping spirits of the people, inspired courage and hope and confidence, often struck back with interest at his assailants, and when a comrade fell, his sorrow was profound. For his heart was tender as a woman's, and when a typist in his office was seriously ill in hospital, he visited her and consoled her, though his every movement was watched and his life was in deadly peril.

He was described by one of the newspapers as " dark-haired, broad-featured, with two luminous dark eyes gleaming from his pallid face on which was stamped unusual character and determination ". It was he, above all, that made the Treaty possible, and Mr. Griffith in no way exaggerated when he described him as the man who won the war.

During these sad days, when the nation's heart was heavy, and when she received world-wide sympathy, there was no word of regret from Mr. De Valera, no kindly message in memory of the gallant dead. In 1917 Mr. Griffith with characteristic unselfishness had voluntarily relinquished the first place, which long years of arduous service had brought him, in favour of the younger man. His concern was for Ireland and not for himself, and he modestly believed that it was best for Ireland that Mr. De Valera should take the premier place. Mr. Collins had risked his life to free Mr. De Valera from Lincoln Prison. But it has often been said that eaten bread is soon forgotten, and in 1922 this curious specimen of an Irish leader refused to recall the past or have any share in the national mourning. For many the explanation was that Mr. De Valera was not an Irishman. The kindly nature, the warm heart, the chivalrous instincts of the Irishman were not his. He was not born in Ireland and was only half Irish by descent. Dominated by personal ambition, the sorrows of Ireland made no appeal to him, and he had, therefore, no tears to shed when Ireland was deprived of two of her most brilliant sons.

Vandyk

LORD LONDONDERRY



Russell

LORD FITZALAN

Russell

HIS EXCELLENCY T. M. HEALY
First Governor-General of the Irish Free State.

Russell

SIR JAMES CRAIG

CHAPTER XXI

Triumph of the Free State

The new Dail elected in June did not meet until September. The rebellion intervened, and while war was raging there was no room for discussions and debates. But in September the position of the Government was sufficiently secured and the time had come for the people's representatives to come together. There was need for legislation, for the Constitution must get legislative sanction in the British Parliament before the end of the year, and in preparation for this the Constitution must first be approved by the Irish National Assembly.

Had Mr. De Valera and his followers accepted the principle of majority rule, and laid down their arms, they could, there is little doubt, have escaped the just punishment of their crimes, and would have been peacefully allowed to take their seats. And if they had taken the prescribed oath, involving acceptance of the Treaty, they would have been, perhaps in combination with the Labour group, a powerful opposition. But Mr. De Valera must still be President of an Irish Republic, though in this position he had no real authority even among Republicans. For his Chief-of-Staff, Mr. Liam Lynch, had outgrown the position of a subordinate, and as head of the Army Executive he dictated rather than accepted conditions, informing Mr. De Valera that " he would only be too pleased to have your views at any time on the situation ". This pleased Mr. De Valera but little. " The position of the political party," he said, " must be straightened out. If it is the policy of the party to leave it all to the army, well then the obvious thing for members of the party is to resign their positions

as public representatives. The present position is that we have all the public responsibility, and no voice and no authority." He would have liked to publicly proclaim the Republic and declare the Dail an illegal assembly. But he could not count on the allegiance of the army, and even if he could the army was too weak and the Provisional Government too strong. And he was conscious that when an election came he and his party would disappear. " We will," he said, " be turned down definitely by the electorate in a few months' time."

The final conclusion he came to was that neither he nor the Deputies who supported him could attend the opening of the new Dail, though he could see no harm in Mr. Ginnell attending.[1] Nor could Mr. Ginnell himself. His capacity for making himself ridiculous was well known, and when he attended the opening session of the Dail, he not only refused to take the oath, but he kept shouting with monotonous iteration, " Is this Dail Eireann for all Ireland?" The members tolerated him for some time with good-humoured contempt, due allowance being made for the vagaries of an old man who had never much sense of responsibility. But the patience of the Assembly was at last exhausted, and Mr. Ginnell, still protesting, was forcibly removed, and the Dail was free to turn to the work of legislation and government.

The first business was to elect a President, and this was done by the unanimous election of Mr. Cosgrave. He then appointed his Cabinet, among them being General Mulcahy, who was appointed Minister of Defence, as well as Commander-in-Chief. Mr. Cosgrave himself took the post of Minister of Finance; Mr. Kevin O'Higgins became Minister of Home Affairs and Vice-President; Dr. MacNeill, Minister of Education; Mr. Fitzgerald, Foreign Minister; Mr. Hogan, Minister of Agriculture; Mr. Blythe, Minister of Local Government; Mr. M'Grath, Minister of Economics; and Mr. Walsh, Postmaster-General. With the exception of Dr. MacNeill they were all young men, and all had been active in the recent struggle for Irish freedom.

[1] De Valera's letters captured by Government agents covering the period from Aug. 30 to Sept. 13.

Some had been in open rebellion in 1916, and all had been at one time or other in prison and could therefore claim that they had suffered for Ireland.

The new President was not the deep thinker that Mr. Griffith was, nor had he been tested by long years of patient waiting to have his ideals realized. On the other hand, he had qualifications which Mr. Griffith lacked. He had several years' experience of municipal administration as a member of the Dublin Corporation; he was a ready speaker and an able debater; he was clear headed and far seeing, and not even Mr. Griffith had a greater hold of realities, or greater strength of will. He had already risked his life in fighting for the freedom of his country, and he had no hesitation now in risking his life to maintain the freedom he had helped to win. His capability to fill the first position in the country was so well recognized that no other was for a moment thought of as a competitor; and it was well for Ireland at that critical time that she had so steady a hand at the helm. General Mulcahy had been already tried in the position of Minister of Defence. He was trusted by the army, and was less objectionable to the Irregulars than any other of the army leaders on the Treaty side. Yet the arrangement of having one and the same man Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief was not a good one. While active operations were going on the whole time of the Commander-in-Chief was required to direct the subordinate commanders and correct defects as they appeared, and this could not be done if he had also to attend the Dail and take a prominent part in its debates.

Not less able than either of these two was the new Vice-President, Mr. Kevin O'Higgins. Belonging to a family noted for the public spirit of its members, and for their capacity to serve their country, he had inherited the public spirit and the talents of his family to the full. With no selfish ambition, he had no patience with treason and treachery masquerading as patriotism, no hesitation about facing any opponents or unmasking their designs, and in the midst of deadly perils he was absolutely without fear.

Before his election, Mr. Cosgrave made a short statement leaving no room for doubt as to what his policy as head of the new Government would be. " It is my intention to implement this Treaty as sanctioned by the vote of the Dail and the electorate, so far as it was free to express an opinion; to enact the Constitution, to assert the authority and supremacy of Parliament; to support and assist the National army in asserting the people's rights; to ask Parliament, if necessary, for such powers as may be deemed essential for the purpose of restoring order and repressing crime; to expedite, as far as lies in the power of the Government, the return of normal conditions, and having established the Free State on a constitutional basis, to speed up the work of reconstruction and reparation."

After his election he announced that the system of dual Government was at an end. In the vain hope of moderating Mr. De Valera's opposition, Mr. Griffith, as President of the Dail, was to continue as head of the army of the Republic until the Free State was in being. There was also the Provisional Government, with General Collins at its head, and with the members of the Dail sitting as members of Parliament for twenty-six counties. Such an arrangement was clumsy and confusing and could be only temporary, and even as a temporary arrangement did not satisfy Mr. De Valera, or moderate the opposition of his party. With Mr. Cosgrave there would be only the Provisional Government of which he, as President of Dail Eireann, would be the head.

As such he defined his attitude towards those in rebellion. He was prepared to pay almost any price for Irish unity, as long as the Treaty position was maintained. He wanted to make peace with his armed opponents, but it must be a real peace. " If peace be made now, it must be on well-defined lines, and it must be a constitutional peace. There must not be and will not be an armed body in the community without the sanction of Parliament, and Parliament must have control of all arms, and armed opposition to its will will not be permitted. We do not contemplate and never said we will fire the last shot to consolidate the supre-

macy of Parliament . . . but if those at present in arms at any future time think the Government fear to assert its authority, they are mistaken. Members of the Government may fall in that task which it is their duty to carry out, but others will take their places, and accept the same responsibility."

General Mulcahy reviewed the army position. Traversing again the well-worn path of futile negotiations with the Irregular chiefs, he showed that unity with these leaders was impossible. The men who wanted no elections and no free press, who wanted to set up a military dictatorship, denounce the Treaty and declare war on the British Empire, had no conception of constitutional liberty and little real love of Ireland. With them further negotiation was useless, and nothing was left but the stern arbitrament of war. But General Mulcahy was careful to repeat what had been already said by President Cosgrave, that the Government had no desire to be vindictive. Even for those in arms the road to reconciliation was still open. But the peace must be built on a firm foundation, and for this there were six necessary conditions:

1. Some body representing the people must be allowed to work the Treaty.
2. That body must be allowed to work it with the best constitution they could get.
3. The sword must not again be thrown into the situation with a view to imposing thereby the demand of moulding any particular clause in the constitution into any particular form.
4. That opposition to the Government making the constitution, framed in accordance with the Treaty, must be along constitutional lines.
5. The army must be the people's army and responsible absolutely to the National Government.
6. That the Government shall, by its regulations, control all arms held in the country.

As neither Mr. De Valera nor Mr. Liam Lynch would accept these conditions, the war went on and the country was being

rapidly driven to disaster. Early in September, a distinguished Irish-born prelate, Dr. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore, told in an American newspaper what he saw during a recent visit to Ireland. The Irregulars were a small minority making war for no reason that he could see on their own people. " They are blowing up bridges, destroying railways, looting banks, denuding farms, robbing private houses, intensifying the brutal sufferings already inflicted on the Irish people by the infamous Black and Tans. They are bringing misery into every county in Ireland, as they roam through the woodlands and hillsides in their work of destruction. Hundreds of Irishmen and women have told me that they are suffering as much to-day at the hands of Irishmen as they ever suffered during the Reign of Terror."

The same issue of the newspaper, which contained this statement, contained a letter from a priest in Castleisland describing the state of things in Kerry.

" There are no trains running. The engines were destroyed, the rails torn up, the bridges blown clean away. Foodstuffs are brought by road from Tralee. By road is not correct—rather through fields and woods and byways. And the cars are robbed wholesale by our so-called Republicans. We are beginning to feel the pinch here. Report has it that the people in Killarney are almost starving. The people are terrified out of their senses. There is fighting night and day. The ambushing of soldiers was expected, but now nobody is safe. The Red Cross is always fired on, and even civilians travelling by car and motors are attacked every day. Every kind of atrocity is committed by gangs who have got beyond control. The decent lads, the farmers' sons, who did their bit against the Tans, and did it splendidly, laid down their arms at the Truce. The present snipers are principally comprised of cowardly ruffians who were never heard of until the Tans disappeared."

The Archbishop of Baltimore was convinced that the Irish Government and the National army were altogether too lenient with the rebels, " and if we are going to have peace and orderly government in Ireland, more stringent measures must be taken

to end the present menace". This view was so widely held in Ireland that many began to ask if the Government meant to govern, or was the army in collusion with the Irregulars. Happily, the Government was quite alive to its responsibilities, and General Mulcahy brought before the Dail a series of resolutions, authorizing the Government to set up military courts for dealing with those in rebellion. They could not be dealt with by the civil courts, because witnesses and juries and judges would be intimidated, probably shot down by unscrupulous armed men, so that nothing was left but the strong arm of martial law. It was assumed, however, that the civil courts were still in being and might be allowed to function in purely civil cases, and the military courts would deal only with those in arms. For such persons, the punishment would be imprisonment, or even death. The accused would have a trial, and might have legal assistance, but there would be no publication of the evidence, and no review of the decision except by the supreme military authority in Dublin.

To these drastic proposals the Labour members objected, not sufficiently realizing that the very life of the nation was at stake. Ultimately, however, the resolutions passed. But before the military courts were set up, the Government gave a last chance of repentance and amendment to those in arms. Even the leaders who had brought so much suffering on their own people were not to be punished if, by the 15th of October, they abandoned the ways of violence and crime and handed in their arms. All the evil they had done would be forgiven, and they might henceforward live in security, and even indulge in constitutional means for the overthrow of the Government. This amnesty was spurned except by a few, and the misguided men in arms continued to make war on the Government and on the people.

The character of this rebellious combination, ostensibly aiming at a Republic, was remarkable. Not one in twenty of those who were now shooting down their own people ever fired a shot during the Greenwood regime. On the contrary, many of them had been on the friendliest terms with the Black and Tans, and

not a few of them had been their paid spies. Many others were mere criminals, who hated order and law and settled government, and who, with the instincts of the idle and the dishonest, plundered their honest neighbours with revolvers in their hands and the cry of " Up De Valera " on their lips. Little less criminal than these were the disappointed place-hunters. Though their services to Ireland were little, they expected to get well placed in the civil or military government of the country, and in preference to men better qualified, and who, when dangerous work had to be done, had borne the heat and the burden of the day. They had pinned their faith to Mr. De Valera in the belief that he would win, and that as his followers and friends their reward was sure. These were the men who clamoured for a settlement and engineered peace resolutions, hoping that peace would bring them salaried positions; and in this contingency they would be quite ready to lower the flag of the Republic. With them were many young girls, giddy, thoughtless, ignorant and vain, and quite prepared to do any dirty work given them to do.

Among the Irregulars were not a few graziers who in past days had not even been Home Rulers. While they shouted for a Republic their cattle were left unmolested and their broad acres untouched. The lawless bands in arms were their friends, and if the war was continued there was the hope that the British would come back. Policemen's sons also swelled the Irregulars' ranks. Their fathers had always served the British, even when savage coercion was enforced, and now the sons would have nothing less than a Republic, as if both fathers and sons wished to atone for the unpopularity of the past. Some officials in the post office and some National teachers were on the same side, though their motives would be hard to discover. More remarkable still was it to find some of the Christian Brothers. They were popular because they had always done good work, and now did much harm. They did not openly take sides, nor expressly teach their pupils to support disorder and crime; but their sympathies were known and the effect was often mischievous in the extreme.

Most remarkable of all was the conduct of some of the priests.

General Mulcahy complained in the Dail that priests had urged on the Irregulars, telling them that surrender would be a sin; and all the world knew that two priests of the Capuchin Order were with the rebels in the Four Courts and remained with them to the last. There were also some Passionists who publicly identified themselves with the cause of rebellion. Of the priests of the other religious orders there may have been some on the same side, but they had at least the good taste not to make their sympathies known. And among the secular priests the recruits in Mr. De Valera's army were few in number and of no great importance in character or position.

The older men, the parish priests and senior curates, were all strong supporters of the Treaty and strong opponents of the rebels; and even among the junior curates, the men of sense and ability had no desire to exchange solid freedom for an impossible Republic. But a small number—a few, perhaps, in each diocese—were ready to chase shadows and accept Mr. De Valera as their guide. Inexperienced and unthinking, they were flattered by the cheers of the unthinking mob. Destitute of any solid qualities of intellect or character, they confounded fame with temporary and passing notoriety. Usually they were University graduates, and as such regarded with something like disdain the older and, as they thought, less informed priests, forgetting that the mere passing of an examination and the possession of a degree do not always imply academic distinction. These young priests, arrogant, conceited and vain, were specially dear to the Irregulars who looked to them for light and guidance, and followed them in opposition to the older priests and even the bishops. Nor can it be doubted that the spectacle of priests contradicting their superiors where there were grave issues of faith and morals was a cause of scandal to good Catholics, and encouraged many young men and women to persevere in crime.

The Catholic bishops had already spoken, and when they met at Maynooth in October, there was a further joint pastoral letter which was read in all the churches in Ireland on the 22nd of the same month. The language was strong. Describing the

Irregulars as engaged in attacking their own country as if she were a foreign power, they added what follows:

" Forgetting, apparently, that a dead nation cannot be free, they have deliberately set out to make our Motherland, as far as they could, a heap of ruins.

" They have caused more damage to Ireland in three months than could be laid to the charge of British rule in so many decades.

" They carry on what they call a war, but which, in the absence of any legitimate authority to justify it, is morally only a system of murder and assassination of the National forces. . . .

" Side by side with this woeful destruction of life and property, there is running a campaign of plunder, raiding banks and private houses, seizing the lands and property of others; burning mansions and country houses, destroying demesnes and slaying cattle. . . .

" Religion itself is not spared. We observe with deepest sorrow that a certain section is engaged in a campaign against the bishops, whose pastoral office they would silence by calumny and intimidation. . . . And in spite of all this sin and crime, they claim to be good Catholics, and demand at the hands of the Church her most sacred privileges like the sacraments.

" . . . Such being the divine law, the guerilla warfare now being carried on by the Irregulars is without moral sanction; and therefore the killing of National soldiers in the course of it is murder before God; the seizing of public or private property is robbery; the trenching of roads, bridges and railways is criminal destruction; the invasion of houses a grievous crime.

" All those who, in contravention of this teaching, participate in such crimes are guilty of the gravest sins and may not be absolved in confession, nor admitted to the Holy Communion, if they propose to persevere in such evil courses.

" It is said that there are some priests who approve of this Irregular insurrection. If there be any such, they are false to their sacred office, and are guilty of the gravest scandal, and will not be allowed to retain the faculties they hold from us. Furthermore, we, each for his own diocese, hereby forbid under pain

of suspension *ipso facto*, reserved to the Ordinary, any priest to advocate or encourage this revolt, publicly or privately."[1]

During the same month, " the Bill to enact a Constitution for Saorstat Eireann and for implementing the Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland, signed at London on the 6th of December, 1921," was considered in the Dail, sitting as a Constituent Assembly. It was in charge of Mr. Kevin O'Higgins who watched over its passage with patience and care, answered objections and met amendments to its clauses, was always ready with his answer, always supplied with information, was suave, conciliatory, firm and strong, and showed a capacity for the practical work of legislation which would do honour to any legislative assembly in the world. Nor was the opposition unduly desirous of placing obstacles in his path, and if sometimes unreasonable faults were found and unreasonable proposals made, these were the acts of individuals, and not of the official opposition.

Some clauses were declared by Mr. O'Higgins to be fundamental and could not be changed without imperilling the Treaty. For it was specially laid down in the Dail that if any provision of the Constitution, or any amendment of it, was repugnant to the provisions of the Treaty, such provision or amendment should be void. But if some clauses could not be changed, others could, and where changes were made it was to make plain what was ambiguous, and in no respect was the liberty conferred by the Treaty curtailed.

Nor was there any difficulty in obtaining for this Constitution the sanction of the British Parliament. There was a general election in Great Britain in November, resulting in the return of a Tory Government to power. Mr. Bonar Law became Prime Minister, and a large proportion of his supporters were vehement reactionaries, who disliked any concession to Ireland. Yet the Treaty and the Constitution were safeguarded. Even a Tory Government wanted peace in Ireland, and the Irish Constitution, which had already passed through Dail Eireann, now got the sanction of the British Parliament.

[1] *Catholic Directory*, 1923.

To demonstrate the anxiety of Great Britain for peace and goodwill between the two nations, Mr. T. M. Healy was appointed the first Governor-General of the Free State. The Irregulars had been predicting that the King's representative would be some English peer, alien to Ireland in race and outlook and entirely out of sympathy with her ideals. But Mr. Healy was as Irish as the Irish hills; he had fought for Ireland and suffered for her; and he had little respect for the shabby pageantry of a mock court at Dublin. Nor would he be likely to suffer any infringement of the Treaty or tolerate any treachery from across the channel.

In September Mr. De Valera complained that he could not count on the allegiance of the army, and that at the next election he and his party would be relegated to private life. In a short time his views underwent a rapid and startling change. A secret meeting of his Parliamentary followers, calling themselves " Dail Eireann, the Parliament and Government of the Republic " took place, and resolutions were passed branding President Cosgrave and his Ministers as the creatures of an alien legislature, engaged in a traitorous conspiracy to establish a Free State and subvert the independence of the Republic. Mr. De Valera was again appointed President, with an Executive Council of twelve members, prominent among them being Messrs. Stack, Moylan and Ruttledge, with Mrs. O'Callaghan and Miss MacSweeney. The army approved, and on this occasion Mr. Liam Lynch and his colleagues of the Army Executive gave their allegiance unreservedly to Mr. De Valera. The wishes of the electors and the condemnation of the Catholic bishops were treated with equal contempt; and everything done by the Parliament and Government of the people was declared illegal by an unrepresentative and irresponsible junta.

The war continued. Troops were ambushed, civic guards attacked, roads and railways destroyed, Government offices raided, the Dublin post office and many others burned; and instead of listening to the voice of reason, Mr. De Valera declared that peace was impossible. The Government was at last compelled to deal

drastically with rebels, and in the middle of November four young men taken in arms in Dublin were tried and executed. The execution of Mr. Childers soon followed. He had been an evil counsellor of Mr. De Valera, a skilled leader in the rebellion. He had been in command at Kilmallock, where a desperate and prolonged defence had been made; he had suggested and superintended the destruction of the great railway viaduct at Mallow; and had been Mr. De Valera's companion when many valuable lives were sacrificed. If the rank and file deserved death, he deserved death much more, being more guilty than they were, and though the necessity for shedding his blood was lamented, there was little sympathy for his fate.

There was more bloodshed when the Free State began its existence, and on the day after the new Governor-General opened the Dail, one of its most respected members, Sean Hales, was murdered in the streets of Dublin. Another Deputy, Mr. O'Maille, the Deputy Speaker, was seriously wounded. Unable to stand against the National army in open fight, driven from the towns, worsted even in ambushes, the Irregular leaders stooped to assassination, so as to make all government impossible. They had already threatened members of public bodies with death if they exercised their right to nominate candidates for the Senate. They had destroyed the property of the people because they had dared to vote for Treaty candidates at elections; and now their last desperate weapon was the murder of senators and deputies. The execution of a few, it was hoped, would frighten the others from attending Parliament, and government would thus become impossible. But the new Government proved to be stronger than the rebel leaders expected, and the answer to the murder of Mr. Hales was the execution of four leaders who were then prisoners in Mountjoy. These were Messrs. Rory O'Connor, Mellows, Barrett, and M'Kelvey. A howl of rage rose from the rebel ranks, especially as it was officially stated by the Government that the four prisoners were executed as a reprisal for the murder of Mr. Hales. The act of the Government was a cruel necessity, but it was efficacious, and though there were many

threats from the Irregulars, no more deputies or senators fell by the bullet of the assassin.

In the Governor-General's speech at the opening of the Dail a legislative programme was outlined. There must be a measure dealing with the extension of the franchise and with elections. The civic guard must have legislative sanction, and a National Defence Force must also have its position and its duties defined. The whole judicial system must be recast; and there must be a measure dealing with land purchase and another with the question of compensation.

But the most pressing question of all was the suppression of disorder and crime. Having abandoned the idea of winning the war, the Irregulars had resolved to leave the country a heap of ruins, and from October to March there was such destruction of public and private property as had not been seen outside of Bolshevist Russia. Not only were Government offices raided and robbed, but the houses of deputies and senators, and even of private individuals, were given to the flames. Lord Lansdowne's house in Kerry, Lord Arran's in Mayo, and the Recess Hotel in Galway perished in October, and to these must be added in the months following many houses in Wexford and Louth, the Bernards' fine mansion at Castlehackett, Lord Mayo's house in Kildare, Mr. Bagwells's house in Tipperary, Moore Hall in Mayo, and the houses of Sir Horace Plunkett, Mr. Gwynn, and Sir Thomas Esmonde.

Nor could any motive be discovered for these burnings except wanton destruction. Lord Arran was neither a Free Stater nor a Republican, but only a Tory landlord. Yet his mansion, valued at £100,000, was destroyed. Recess Hotel and the railway station at Sligo were the property of shareholders. Moore Hall had been the residence of Mr. G. H. Moore who in dark days had struck many a brave blow for Ireland. Sir Thomas Esmonde had come out from the ranks of the landlords to fight the battles of the people. Mr. Gwynn was a distinguished literary man, but with no animus against the Irregulars. Mr. Bagwells's father had done valuable historical work, and his library was one of the

finest in Ireland; but he was a senator, and both his house and library became the prey of the petrol can. The art treasures in Sir Horace Plunkett's house would have appealed to men with even a rudimentary conception of culture. But these anarchists despised art as they did Sir Horace Plunkett's service to Ireland. In all this nothing was so heartless as the burning of the house of Captain M'Garry, a man who had fought and suffered for Ireland. Yet his house was attacked, his wife driven out into the street, his little boy burned to death because no one would be allowed to rescue him from the flames.

The railways became the special object of attack. The Great Northern line was constantly harassed, especially near Dublin and Dundalk. In Wexford bridges were no sooner repaired than they were blown up, trains were derailed and stations burned. The Great Southern line was attacked almost daily, and often by the Company's own servants who were thus false to their employers and to their country. On the Midland Great Western line outrages were less frequent; but even here bridges were destroyed, wires cut, rails torn up, and at the Liffey Junction near Dublin a passenger train was set on fire and sent headlong to the Broadstone station, the design being to destroy the train and burn all the passengers on board. And the design was only frustrated by the bravery of a railway worker who stopped the train at the peril of his life.

To meet these attacks on the life of the nation demanded incessant vigilance from the executive. The army was increased; Irregulars were hunted down and captured, and in some cases executed; detectives were successful in discovering arms and ammunition; and a Railway Protection Corps was embodied, and with armoured trains and searchlights and machine-guns soon curbed the criminal insolence of the railway workers who were aiding the rebels.

Concurrently with these measures, many rebel leaders were captured, and in March, President Cosgrave was able to say that the end of the rebellion was at hand. Attacks on army posts which in November numbered ninety-eight, had fallen to seventy-

two in December, to sixty-three in January, and to thirty-nine in February. In two months, five hundred prisoners had been released, all having signed an undertaking to obey the law and live as peaceful citizens. The ablest leader of the Irregulars, Liam Deasy, had recently been captured; the ablest fighting man in Tipperary—a man named Lacy, as had also Liam Lynch, the rebel Commander-in-Chief. The Irregular leaders as shown by their captured correspondence, were dispirited and divided, the civic guard were doing their police work without hindrance and the new District Justices holding their Courts. "The Republican rebellion is at an end, and Ireland is now entering a new era of restoration and law, and is settling down to normal life."

Meantime many attempts had been made to bring about peace. On the one side, the Government always insisted on a laying down of arms and an opposition on constitutional lines, while the Irregulars would hold their arms and have nothing less than a Republic; and no peacemaker could bridge the chasm between these two positions. The American Friends of Irish Freedom favoured separation from England, but condemned the Irregulars and advised constitutional methods. The members of the People's Peace League were Republican in sympathy and outlook, and their efforts were futile. Nor could any success be expected from the peace resolutions of labour associations and local councils. They were passed usually as the result of threats from the Irregulars, and often did not express the real views of those who voted for them. Nor did they contain any tangible proposal. They lamented the loss of life and property, expressed horror at the executions, and predicted the ruin of the country; but they did not say how the ruin of the country was to be averted, and they had no condemnation for the murder of soldiers, nor for the wanton destruction of public or private property. The neutral I.R.A. officers protested that they were neither Republicans nor Free State. They called for a truce which would lead to a peace, and predicted that if there was no such peace, both the Free State and the Republic would disappear.

Topical

IRISH FREE STATE CABINET IN SESSION, OCTOBER, 1922

Left to right: General J. McGrath, Hugh Kennedy, W. Cosgrave, Ernest Blythe, Kevin O'Higgins, J. J. Walsh.

But their attitude could not be maintained; for the Free State was set up by the people's votes, and those who called themselves Republicans had no right to destroy the Government against the wishes of the people. The fact was that most of these neutral officers were not neutral but Republicans without, however, the courage to join the Republicans in arms.

The first tangible proposal came from the Irregular leader, Mr. Liam Deasy. He had fought until he knew that there was no chance of success, confessing that his main reliance was on the separatist elements in the Free State Army. But even these would have nothing to do with him, and he had been thinking of peace when he was captured and lodged in Limerick prison. He was promptly court-martialled and sentenced to death. He was, however, reprieved and brought to Dublin where he saw General Mulcahy, and agreed to appeal to his Irregular associates to surrender both arms and men to the Government and to do so unconditionally. His idea was to halt and rest and in time to prepare for a united and final effort for complete independence.

Mr. Liam Lynch's answer to this appeal was to issue an order in the event of further executions to shoot at sight all members of the Dail, all senators, army officers, judges, Government officials and newspaper editors and proprietors. The houses of all such and of those who sympathized with them were to be destroyed. But the Irregular cause was rapidly losing ground. One of its chiefs, Mr. Moylan, went to America, but could get no money there as the people were hostile; and when, in April, Mr. Lynch was killed and Mr. Stack taken prisoner, Mr. De Valera lost courage. In a proclamation to his followers, he admitted the right of the majority to rule and the right of the Government to control the army. He wanted freedom of the press, freedom of meeting and freedom of election, but he was still opposed to the oath in the Constitution. He asked for a personal interview with President Cosgrave, which, however, Mr. Cosgrave declined. He had no hope that anything good would come from such an interview; but he had no objection to tell two respected senators, Messrs. Jameson and Douglas, who were willing to act as friendly

intermediaries, what were the Government terms. The rebels must hand in all arms and accept majority rule, and when they had done this, all prisoners would be released. It was not Mr. De Valera's custom to give a straight answer, and he would not say yes or no. But he told Messrs. Jameson and Douglas that, while assenting to majority rule and to the right of the Government to control all arms, he would insist on a general election in September, and pending this the arms of the Irregulars would be handed in, but would be kept in barracks under their own officers. He wanted all Republican funds in America handed over to him, and he would not accept the oath. He had already ordered a cessation of hostilities and complained that his followers were being still attacked by the Government forces.

President Cosgrave's last word was soon spoken. He would have no discussion on the oath; but he was prepared to have the clergy receive the rebels' arms, and when they had all been handed in, the prisoners would be set free and might indulge in any propaganda they pleased in preparation for the general election. Until Mr. De Valera signified acceptance of these conditions, Mr. Cosgrave desired to have no further communication with him.

The truth was that Mr. De Valera was beaten, and his armed followers were no longer able to continue the fight. American support was for the Government and not for the rebellious. Father O'Flanagan and Mr. O'Kelly, who went as Republican envoys to Australia, met with an unfriendly reception. The Republican organization in Great Britain was broken up by the arrest of its leaders, and arms and ammunition could no longer be obtained from across the channel. The rank and file in arms were falling away from leaders who could not promise them success. Plunder was becoming less profitable, and numerous attacks on barracks might lead to captures and executions. The rebel combatants were being thinned by arrests and emigration. The position had become desperate, and in the last days of May Mr. De Valera issued an order to his followers telling them that the Republic could no longer be defended. His vanity and

hypocrisy remained to the last, for his proclamation began: " To all ranks from the President," and it ended by saying, " May God guard every one of you ". And these were the men who, for twelve mad months, had been murdering and plundering their own people. They were to lay aside their arms, but not to surrender them to the Government. They were to be dumped by order of Mr. Aiken, " Chief of the Staff ". He would not admit that the Free State had won, though he conceded that " the foreign and domestic enemies of the Republic " had prevailed. At last the war was over, and the people's Government was free to survey the damage that had been done.

Seldom in history has there been so much damage done to any country in so short a space of time by her own rebellious and recreant sons. At the beginning of 1922, Ireland was unusually prosperous. During the world war her exports had trebled. The deposits in Irish banks amounted to more than two hundred millions, her investments abroad to three hundred millions. She was a creditor nation, and so good a customer of England that British manufacturers and merchants had been a potent factor in giving her her freedom. The land had very largely passed into the people's hands, and a prosperous race of peasant proprietors had replaced the shivering and pauperized tenants of other days. Emigration had almost ceased; the horrors of the Black and Tans were already beginning to be forgotten; and with plenty of capital, improved methods of education and liberty to shape her own destiny, she would soon be one of the most prosperous and contented countries in the world.

Then came Mr. De Valera and his mad army of Irregulars. The blocking of roads cut off the markets from Ireland's produce. The destruction of railways almost killed the butter industry of Munster. The destruction of post offices and mails were a fatal bar to business either at home or abroad. The robbery of banks helped to weaken confidence in her credit. It was even ordered by the Irregulars that bread-vans should be burned and the crops left unsown so that the people might be starved. On every side harm was done which would not easily be repaired. Irish de-

velopment was arrested; the final settlement of the land question delayed; the slum houses in cities and towns could not be replaced by healthy habitations; unemployment was increased; high taxation had to be maintained; credit, though not destroyed, was seriously impaired; debts were left unpaid; robbery became common; and Irish girls, so long the pride of the nation, had, in many cases, flung to the winds all religious and moral restraint and lost all sense of decency and shame.[1]

The Catholics and Nationalists of the six counties had special reasons to complain. With the Government of Ireland Act on the Statute Book and a Parliament sitting in Belfast, the British signatories to the Treaty could not have done otherwise than they had done. If they compelled the Ulster Orangemen to come into the Free State, there would certainly have been bloodshed. They could only trust to the attractive influence of good government at Dublin, and the healing influence of time. These six counties were not homogeneous as was asserted. They were not exceptionally prosperous. They would certainly suffer no religious persecution in the Free State, nor would the industries of Belfast suffer.[2] The fact was that there was less emigration from Munster and Connaught than from Ulster.[3] Cut off from the Free State, Orange Ulster would suffer severely. Her ports would lose the traffic from the twenty-six counties, and the outgoing traffic inland from Belfast as a distributing centre; and her industrial supremacy might be seriously challenged by rival industries from the Free State, favoured by lighter taxation and fed by bounties.[4] Finally, under the Government of Ireland Act's financial arrangements, Orange Ulster must become insolvent without British subsidies, which could not be continued. And the position would become worse when the Boundary Commission, provided for by the Treaty, concluded its labours, and when under any equitable adjustment of boundaries, the area of Orange Ulster was seriously curtailed.[5]

[1] Official Document—*Ireland's Opportunity*.
[2] Milroy's *The Case of Ulster*, p. 15.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 34.
[4] Milroy, p. 84.
[5] *Ibid*, pp. 153–4.

The Belfast manufacturers and merchants are keen men of business and would soon realize that aggressive Protestant ascendancy over a small area was a poor substitute for prosperity. Men like Sir James Craig and Lord Londonderry would see that the raucous cries of the Belfast shipyards were not the same as the voice of reason or prudence. They did not find Mr. Griffith or General Collins unreasonable, nor would they find President Cosgrave or Mr. O'Higgins. Already friendly discussion had done much. The benevolent assistance of British statesmen would not be wanting, and in further discussion suspicion would disappear, bigotry would lose its sting, and national unity would be evolved.

But Mr. De Valera desired no such happy result. Nothing must be allowed to redound to the credit of the statesmen of the Free State. The Craig-Collins agreement was attacked; and every time that the fires of Belfast bigotry burned low, Mr. De Valera and his followers cast fresh fuel on the expiring flames. This was the meaning of the attack on Protestants, of the destruction of northern railways and Belfast goods. Armed men were sent across the border to stir up strife. And they succeeded so well that in the first six months of 1922 there were ninety-five Protestants killed and two hundred and ten wounded, and of the Catholics one hundred and seventy were killed and three hundred and forty-five wounded. In addition to this, many thousands of inoffensive Catholics were driven from their employment and many thousands more driven from their homes.[1] But Mr. De Valera and his Irregulars were satisfied, because, as they hoped, the cause of Irish unity was thus indefinitely postponed.

[1] Milroy, p. 68.

CHAPTER XXII

The Free State Government

In the negotiations for peace in May, 1923, between the Government and the Irregulars, Mr. De Valera demanded a General Election in the following September. His other conditions—about the surrender and storage of arms, the release of prisoners, and the abolition of the oath—could not even be considered. But there was no difficulty about an early election. "Mr. De Valera well knows," says Mr. Cosgrave, "that we are already preparing for an early election, and if he accepts the preliminary conditions (that is, regarding the custody of arms and the good faith of prisoners if released) we have made it clear we would give every possible opportunity to all parties to obtain votes." As there was no such acceptance of the Government's conditions, the struggle was to go on, even though armed resistance had ceased, and Treaty and anti-Treaty parties faced each other in opposition when the General Election came, not in September but in August.

On the eve of the election Mr. Cosgrave issued an appeal to the Irish people, confidently asking for their votes. He relied on what his Government had been able to do, and this in face of an armed and unscrupulous opposition. He pointed out that a Constitution had been framed and carried into law in accordance with the Treaty, "a Constitution which need not fear comparison with that of any other free people, by whatever name described". The Government had carried a measure of adult suffrage, enabling every man and woman to vote who had reached the age of 21 years. He pointed with pride to the District Justices'

Courts which had supplanted the old Petty Sessions Courts in which the people never had confidence; to the Civic Guard as the people's friend, calling it, as he well might, a model police force; and a Land Purchase Act had been passed which ought to end the land troubles for ever. Above all, peace had been established and armed resistance beaten down. "We have," he said, "swept up most of the cowards and the bullies who harried the country and tried to break your hearts and wills under the false banner of a Republic. We have captured or made them bury out of sight the weapons of destruction, the petrol cans, the guns, and the land-mines. We have led you out of a tyranny founded on falsehood and anarchy into the clear air of law enforced and order firmly established."

Much remained yet to be done. There was need for a sound and well-considered fiscal policy; for educational and poor-law reform and for a reform of the judiciary; there was the grave question of the boundary between the Free State and the excluded counties of Ulster; and the question, equally grave, of the financial adjustment between Ireland and Great Britain. But Mr. Cosgrave had already shown conspicuous courage, and if the people renewed their confidence in him, he and his Government would face the problems and difficulties of the future with the same courage and skill as they had faced the problems and difficulties of the past.

Already much legislative work had been done. There were Acts which were necessary to tide over the period of transition. There were Acts dealing with malicious injuries, with destruction of property, and with compensation for those who had suffered, either at the hands of the British forces or the Irregulars. There was an Indemnity Act with respect to the perpetration of crimes committed in time of war. There was an Act dealing with taxation in the Free State as distinct from the taxation of property outside held by Free State subjects. There was an extremely important measure legalizing the Army and Civic Guard. And there was a radical reform of the franchise laws.

But of all the Acts passed there was none calculated to pro-

duce more beneficial results than the Land Act. Its title was: "An Act to complete the process of the purchase of agricultural land in Saorstat Eireann, if necessary, by the exercise of definite compulsory powers in the Land Commission, thus establishing a national peasant proprietary, and for the relief of congestion". There was no longer any political difficulty; for men of all parties agreed that land purchase must be completed, and that only then would land troubles finally disappear. Dual ownership had been proved to be a failure, and landlord and tenant agreed that the beneficent work of making Ireland a land of peasant proprietors must be continued until the last landlord had been bought out and the last tenant had been put in possession of his holding, subject only to a terminable annuity payable to the State.

Under the operation of previous purchase Acts 331,000 holdings, with an acreage of nearly 11,000,000, had been vested in the occupiers, and nearly 70,000 additional holdings, with an acreage of more than 2,200,000, had been purchased but not vested. They had passed from the landlords' hands, but had not yet been legally transferred by the Government to the occupying tenants. There still remained 70,000 unpurchased tenants with a yearly rental of nearly £1,000,000. There was also some untenanted land, which would be required for the relief of congestion.

To transfer all this land and make the tenants peasant proprietors, each with a sufficiency of land to live in decency, was a much smaller problem than that which confronted Mr. Wyndham in 1903. Yet the difficulties in 1923 were considerable. There was the question of price on which landlord and tenant were sure to hold widely divergent views. There was the difficulty of arrears, some tenants owing so much that they would be quite unable to pay in full. There was the question of economic holdings, many of the existing ones being less than five or six acres in extent. And if the new peasant proprietors must have economic holdings it would necessitate the migration of some, perhaps to a considerable distance. There were the sons of farmers, brought up to farming and knowing no other business, and many

of these clamoured for land, exciting the pity of the public by reciting the woes of landless men. Finally, and not the least of the difficulties, was that of finance. The land in 1903 was paid for by stock bearing interest at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, and under the Land Act of 1909 the interest was 3 per cent. But in 1923 this stock was not more than 60 in the open market, and some other means must be devised than a financial arrangement which had brought land purchase to a standstill.

Mr. Hogan, who had charge of the new measure, faced the difficulties in front of him with commendable courage and skill. He had the advantage of being a farmer as well as a lawyer, and showed a thorough mastery of his subject, always ready to explain and reply to objections in the Dail. And he succeeded in passing his Bill without any material alterations. Under its provisions the Irish landlord finally disappeared from the Free State. On a certain appointed day all unsold land passed into the hands of the Land Commission, which would henceforth have sole authority in the distribution of purchased lands; for the Congested Districts Board was abolished, and all its uncompleted work was transferred to the Land Commission. In the congested districts all untenanted lands were acquired at once by the Land Commission. Outside the congested districts all untenanted land would be acquired compulsorily.

All arrears due previous to the 1st of May, 1920, were wiped out; arrears due between that date and May, 1923, would be paid, but with a reduction of 25 per cent. The collection would be made by the Land Commission, who might employ agents for the purpose, and might extend the time for payment. These payments as made would be handed over to the landlord. All this was fair and businesslike, and so also were the arrangements about price. Judicial tenants who had their rents fixed before 16th August, 1911, were given a reduction of 35 per cent; all those whose rents had been fixed since 16th August, 1911, were given a reduction of 30 per cent. Non-judicial tenants might agree as to the price with their landlords, but if they could not the Land Commission fixed the price. An appeal from the Land

Commission might be made to the Judicial Commissioners, whose decision would be final. Henceforth all those tenants would pay, not rent to the landlord, but a terminable annuity to the State. The period covered would be sixty-eight years, and it would begin to run from the appointed day, not as heretofore from the date of the vesting order.

Mr. Hogan's intention was to give the tenant the largest possible reduction, while not unduly lessening the landlord's income. He therefore added to the price charged the tenant a 10 per cent bonus payable by the State. The total sum, however, was not payable to the landlord in cash but in stock, which was made legal tender and would bear interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The tenant, on the other hand, would pay interest on the smaller sum, that is, the total purchase less the bonus, but he would pay at $4\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, the extra $\frac{1}{4}$ being utilized as a sinking fund. If, for instance, a tenant's rent was £100 a year, it was changed on the " appointed day " into a terminable annuity of £65 a year. The capital value of the amount would be £1368, and this, supplemented by a 10 per cent bonus, would make £1505. This latter sum bearing $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent interest would be the landlord's income, and amount to £67, 14*s*. in the year. The merit of this arrangement was that the tenant at once got a substantial reduction, and was freed from the trouble and insecurity of a periodic revision of his rent. The landlord, on his side, got a marketable security and an assured income guaranteed by the whole power of the State.

With regard to untenanted land, its price would be fixed and its distribution carried out by the Land Commission. But Mr. Hogan was careful to emphasize that the purchased tenants with uneconomic holdings would have the first claim on the untenanted lands, and must have their wants supplied before any land would be available for landless men.

This was the new Land Purchase Act, which was welcomed by all reasonable men, whether on the tenant or the landlord side.

On election platforms the Treaty candidates did not fail to point out that at last Irish landlordism was abolished; that order

had been restored; that men and women, no longer stopped by fallen trees or broken roads, could pass unmolested to fair or market or mass. Nor were their slumbers broken by the attacks of midnight marauders, plundering in the name of the Republic. Courts of justice were at work, and when criminals were found guilty their punishment was so exemplary that the lawless were restrained by fear. Behind these Treaty candidates was every Catholic bishop in Ireland, the priests with few exceptions, and every peacefully disposed citizen who hated anarchy and crime and wanted order and settled conditions. Across the Atlantic came the good wishes of the venerated patriot, John Devoy, who had fought for Ireland nearly sixty years before. Judge Cohalan, who belonged to a later age and had been prominent and powerful in Irish-American movements, not only condemned the wreckers, but came to Ireland to help in the elections on the Treaty side. And from London the veteran patriot Dr. Mark Ryan sent his good wishes. A republican all his life, he would have preferred an Irish Republic to an Irish Free State; but he wanted for his country the freedom which the Treaty gave; and for the criminal methods of the Irregulars—their revolvers and land-mines and petrol cans—he had nothing but words of scorn.

On their side, the Republicans had nothing but the old worn-out catch cries. They must have an independent Republic; they must break with England; they must repudiate the Treaty and the Free State Government. The National troops were only English soldiers, magistrates and judges and civic guards only English functionaries, and Dail Eireann an illegal assembly. They claimed that the Irish Republic still lived; that Mr. De Valera was its President; and that Miss MacSweeney and a few others of her stamp were the Executive Council of the Republic. They declared, indeed, that they had ceased to make war, and would henceforth maintain the Republic by constitutional means. But they retained their arms, and hinted in no obscure fashion that these arms might be used at some future time.

Between these two parties there were the Labourers, the Farmers, and the Independents. Mr. Johnson, the leader of the

Labour party, was a man of much more than average ability, and in the Dail had filled the position of Opposition leader with credit. But the forces he led into the electoral battle were a divided army. Some of his party wanted a workman's republic, forgetting the object lesson which Russia had given to the world. Others were making impossible demands for the labourers. Even Mr. Johnson himself was not an enthusiastic supporter of the Treaty. To add to the confusion, Mr. James Larkin had but lately returned from America and denounced Mr. Johnson and the more moderate men. Extolling the merits of strikes he promised the workers a complete triumph over the capitalists, and soon brought Dublin to the verge of ruin. The workers were bewildered, and in many cases did not vote, with the result that Labour lost at the elections, for only fourteen Labour candidates had been successful.

The Independents had several men of ability among them, and were able to return seventeen members. Had they been under a single leader they would probably have done better. But in an independent party it is every man for himself, the sense of obedience and discipline is wanting; and without cohesion and singleness of purpose no striking success can be gained.

In a country where agriculture is the main industry the Farmers ought to be able to return more than fifteen, which is the small number they returned. But capable leadership was lacking, organization was defective, and no care was taken to select suitable candidates. In these circumstances failure was to be expected, but few expected that the failure would be so complete.

As for the Republicans, with their scandalous record and their impossible programme, it was commonly believed that they would almost disappear. Between them and the supporters of the Government no reasonable man or woman could hesitate. But the unthinking among the voters were found to be more numerous than was expected, and when the election was over only sixty-three supporters of the Government had been returned, while there were no less than forty-four Republicans. Ignoring hard facts the Government had given votes to boys and girls with no

sense of civic responsibility, and soon found that they had enfranchised their most bitter opponents. Under the direction of paid agents they stopped at nothing, and employed every weapon, legitimate and illegitimate, which could be employed. They watched the register carefully; they canvassed from house to house, by night as well as by day. They intimidated the weak by telling them that the ballot afforded no real secrecy, and that the manner in which each voted could be easily ascertained. They spoke of a Republic as if nothing was required for its certain establishment but success at the polls; and once established rents and taxes would disappear. They assured the voters that a Republican victory would mean the instant release of the prisoners, followed quickly by unity and peace. In some mysterious way the Republican agents had plenty of money at their disposal. No Republican voter was left without a suitable conveyance to reach the polling stations. The ignorant and illiterate were carefully instructed how to vote before the election day; and when they arrived at the booths they knew their own candidates and the order their preference votes were to be cast. Nor was any booth left without a supply of personating agents and clerks to watch over the interests of the Republicans. Such enthusiasm and energy were worthy of a better cause, and accounted for the unexpected success of the Republicans at the polls.

On the Government side there was a striking contrast to all this. The registers were entirely neglected. Not until the eve of the election was an organization started, and this got the title of Cuman-na-ngael. A century earlier Irish was the language of the people in the greater part of Ireland; but in 1923 Ireland was an English-speaking country, and only in a few districts did Irish as a spoken language survive. Yet the supporters of the Government gave their organization a name which the vast majority of the voters did not understand. Republican they knew and Free Stater, but they did not know Cuman-na-ngael. Hardly any attempt was made to counteract the misstatements on the Republican side; nor to instruct the voters on the intricacies of proportional representation; nor to protect timid voters

from threats and terrorism. No vehicles were provided to convey old and infirm voters to the polling stations; and the cases were many where the presiding officer and his clerk and the personating agents were all aggressive and unscrupulous Republicans. The ignorant and timid were thus left unprotected, and votes were lost to the Government, while the Republicans polled their full strength.

Large numbers did not vote, and many of them were neither timid nor ignorant. They would not vote Republican because they wanted the Treaty. But, for various reasons, they would not vote for the Government. Some complained of the executions, forgetting, apparently, that those executed had plotted to overthrow the established government. Others complained of the numbers imprisoned without trial. Not a few were disgusted with the waste and inefficiency which were all too common; and if this waste continued it was only a question of time until national insolvency was reached.

Had the Republicans the good sense to take their seats in the Dail, and fill the rôle of a constitutional opposition, the existence of Mr. Cosgrave's Government would be gravely imperilled. It was vulnerable, as all governments are, and a coalition of Republicans and Labour, and perhaps some Independents, might easily have been formed. But the extremists among the Republicans carried the day. Mr. De Valera, who had been arrested and imprisoned, would still be President of the Irish Republic. Miss MacSweeney would have no oath and no connection with the British Empire; and those who favoured compromise and constitutional methods quailed before the lash of her tongue. Mr. Cosgrave was therefore quite safe. With forty-four Republicans outside the Dail his party of sixty-three, augmented to sixty-five by two Independents, was sufficiently strong, especially as nearly all those in the Dail accepted the Treaty. He was therefore re-elected President of the Executive Council, and reappointed the old members of his Cabinet, and the work of government was continued. He was then free to proceed to Geneva and ask that Ireland should be admitted to the League of Nations.

In this task he acquitted himself well. The Special Committee of the League of Nations which had to examine credentials and decide whether an applicant nation should be admitted a member of the League, had decided unanimously in Ireland's favour, and had done so with the full approval of the British representatives. The question was then put to the larger assembly that the committee's report should be approved, and Ireland admitted to membership. Again there was unanimity. Not one of the fifty-two nations represented at Geneva objected to the new-comer, and not only was there unanimity but applause. Mr. Cosgrave and his colleagues, Messrs. MacNeill and Fitzgerald, were then called into the assembly; and when Mr. Cosgrave addressed his fellow delegates of the nations, his reception was most cordial and friendly, heightened in its cordiality, no doubt, by the eloquence of his language and the becoming modesty of his demeanour. The Irish delegates were subsequently entertained by the French statesman M. Thomas, and also by the press representatives at Geneva from all quarters of the world.

Another pleasant experience awaited Mr. Cosgrave and his colleagues on their return home. For the first time they attended the Imperial Conference at London, which was made up of delegates from the commonwealth of nations constituting the British Empire. The Irish Free State was there on a level with Canada, Australia, and South Africa, and on an equality with English members of the Conference. Nor could anything exceed the kindness and cordiality of the greeting which the Irish delegates received, that of General Smuts from South Africa being specially warm.

A Free State given international recognition as a member of the League of Nations, and occupying an equal place with Canada and South Africa at the Imperial Conference, was no longer in an equivocal position and showed what splendid progress had been made since the days of Sir Hamar Greenwood and his Black and Tans. But there were difficulties still to be overcome, and prominent among them were the disputes between employer and employed. In Waterford, in spite of agricultural depression and

consequent serious losses to the farmers, the labourers insisted on having no diminution of wages. In Norfolk agricultural labourers received but 25*s.* a week; but the Waterford men scorned to accept such wages, and as the farmers were unable to pay the wages demanded the labourers struck. The Transport Union backed up and even encouraged the strikers, and the county of Waterford soon became the scene of many lawless acts. The extremists among the strikers waylaid farmers on the road, and in many cases burned their hay and crops and farm buildings, and even their dwelling-houses. The farmers retorted by combining, sent their stock and produce to the markets, loaded the trains and the ships, declared they could not pay the wages demanded, and that they would have no negotiation with their labourers through the medium of the Transport Union. Worse than this, labourers were in turn attacked, sometimes badly beaten, and in a few cases had their houses burned and their little property destroyed. The Government sent soldiers and civic guards to protect those attacked; but the strike continued, with inevitable suffering on both sides. Government intervention was found to be unavailing, and as the months passed the trouble lessened, but was not ended, gradually dying down like a smouldering fire.

Cork also suffered from prolonged strikes, but in this case the trouble was confined to the city. Here the attitude of the labourers was unreasonable and impossible to defend. They insisted on wages which were 25 per cent higher than the wages paid in Dublin and 40 per cent higher than the London figure. They insisted on employers keeping on a full staff, though they had only work for some; and they would submit to no reduction in wages in spite of lessened business and falling prices. They even refused a conference with the employers, peremptorily insisting on their full demand. The employers pointed out that their business could not stand the strain, that the price of living had gone down, and that wages ought also to come down. They pointed out that in London painters were paid 66*s.* a week, but in Cork 94*s.*; that in London builders' labourers received 55*s.* a week, but in Cork 78*s.*; that in Cork it cost 7*s.* 6*d.* to bake a

sack of flour, but only 2*s*. 8*d*. in Belfast; and that, as a consequence, many business places in Cork had to be closed because there was no profit, and a continuance in business under such circumstances meant inevitable bankruptcy.

In Dublin a state of things existed analogous to that which ruled in Cork. In 1914 the docker's wage was 30*s*. for a 60-hours week; in 1920 it was 90*s*. for a 46-hours week. In September, 1921, this wage was reduced by 6*s*. a week and in February by a further 6*s*., being still 78*s*. At the same date the figures were, in Belfast, 64*s*. for a 46-hours week; in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow, 56*s*. for a 44-hours week; and the intention of the Dublin employers was to bring the wages down ultimately to the British level. But the Dublin dockers demurred and struck work in July, paralysing shipping at Dublin as it had been already paralysed at Cork and other southern towns, thus diverting traffic to Belfast.

There were many moderate men among the Dublin workers anxious for compromise and peace. But the extremists prevailed and Mr. Larkin was prodigal of promises and predicted a certain and speedy victory. At Cork the Government intervened, though unsuccessfully; but Mr. Larkin and his extremists were given a free rein, even when they repudiated their elected leaders and intimidated those men who were ready to work. The Dublin docks were deserted, distress was everywhere, and the farmers, unable to ship their cattle, were brought to the verge of ruin. And there was grave dissatisfaction with the Government, who refused to curb the insolence of Mr. Larkin and restrain the lawlessness of his men. At last President Cosgrave intervened with proposals of a moderate reduction of wages, which would be but temporary, the question of permanent rates to be later decided by an arbitration board. The moderate workers, already reduced to starvation, willingly accepted these terms. Mr. Larkin and his friends acquiesced, still talking boastfully, though he had really suffered a serious defeat.

As the year waned, the active Irregulars still at large were few, and, though there were armed robberies occasionally, attacks on

soldiers and civic guards had ceased. The leaders, with few exceptions, were interned, and Mr. De Valera, within the shelter of the barracks at Arbor Hill, could peacefully read his books and meditate on all the evil he had done. Neither he nor the other leaders would order the surrender of the arms concealed throughout the country, nor would they promise to rely in the future only on constitutional means; and as long as this attitude was maintained there could be no question of their release. But among the 8000 Irregulars interned many were known to be of little ability or importance, and as they were ready to abandon the ways of violence and give guarantees of good behaviour the prison doors were thrown open and hundreds released week after week. The leaders got alarmed that soon none would be interned but themselves, and they issued an order that there must be an unconditional release of all. Failing this, all those interned must go on hunger strike. No Government could let 8000 brave men and women die, and if it did it was doomed.

But the Government did not flinch, and the weapon of the hunger strike broke in the hands of its authors. Mr. De Valera did not himself go on hunger strike, nor did many of the leaders, and among the thousands who did there was a rapid falling away until only a few hundreds obeyed the order given them. There were two deaths, and then the Irregular leaders called off the hunger strike. As Christmas approached the more harmless and unimportant were set free, and at the dawn of the new year considerably less than 2000 remained interned. For the Irregulars the hunger strike had been a defeat and for the Government a victory.

A difficulty of another kind was the conduct of some of the local bodies. In the prevailing confusion at the last election the county and district councils were recruited from men of a poor type. Instead of confining themselves to their proper business of minding the roads and bridges and safeguarding the public health, they met only to pass foolish resolutions attacking the Government, or it might be demanding the unconditional release of the Republican prisoners. Often they adjourned without transacting

any business; often they failed to attend, and there was no quorum; still more frequently they failed even to collect the rates. In many counties and districts local government had become a byword and a scandal, and the Government, in order to avoid a collapse, were compelled to dismiss the Councils and appoint a commissioner to do the work left undone. The existing system had become a failure and called for a sweeping change.

Not the least of the Government's difficulties arose from the conduct of their own paid servants. In the terrible days of the Black and Tans the active combatants on the Irish side were few, and a gallant fight they made. But when the truce came and danger had disappeared, there was a startling increase in the number of patriots whose exploits had been so far unobserved and whose merits had been hitherto unrevealed. They had stood in the market-place idle until the shades of evening had fallen and then came to claim the same reward as those who had borne the heat and burden of the day. They had, they said, fought the Black and Tans, or helped those who had. At a later stage they had helped against the Irregulars; they had done organizing work in the constituencies; or it might be that they were relatives or personal friends of the senators or members of the Dail. All such expected offices under the Government, and in too many cases they got offices. To create vacancies trained and capable civil servants retired. But the rights of these civil servants were carefully guaranteed by the Treaty, and the Government was thus compelled to pay pensions to capable and trained men who did nothing, and salaries to inexperienced men who were incapable of doing the work set them to do. Being incapable, more officials were appointed until at last the waste and extravagance of Dublin Castle was exceeded, and Dublin Castle government in its day was the most wasteful in Europe.

The army was the worst offender of all. Reluctant to incur unpopularity, which might help the Irregulars, Generals Mulcahy and Collins refused the proffer of British troops to put down the rebellion. They were reluctant even to employ Irishmen trained in the British army, and for the most part employed only untrained

men. Only a small number of these had been active in the guerilla war against the British. The remainder knew little or nothing of the use of arms, and nothing of military life; and officers were wanting to turn these inexperienced men into trained soldiers. It was skill and training, not bravery, that was wanting; and the casual reader, forgetting these facts, found it hard to understand how, in a fight lasting for several hours, with hundreds engaged on both sides, the casualties were so few.

With the flight of the Irregulars from the positions they held, the National troops entered and garrisoned the towns. Then the evils of defective organization appeared. Officers and men were left in their own districts, the officers selected by the men, and often as the result of wirepulling and intrigue, and sometimes with less education than the men under their command. Situated in the midst of their friends, many of whom were Irregulars, they became active only under pressure from head-quarters, and even then their activity was spasmodic and ineffective. The officers especially had no desire to capture the few Irregulars still at large, because this might lead to the disbandment of the army and the loss of position and pay. At the Curragh, Dublin, and a few other large centres the period since the Irregulars ceased from active operations had been utilized to make men and officers efficient. Capable officers were in command, training went on, and discipline was maintained. But over large areas there was neither training nor discipline. The military authorities relied on their superior officers in the provinces, and in some cases these superior officers, with high-sounding titles and good salaries, allowed their subordinates to do as they pleased. These garrison commanders, unable to teach their men and unwilling to learn themselves, imitated their superiors and did nothing. There was no drilling, no training, no attempt to educate the rank and file, who were perfectly willing to learn, no supervision of accounts, and boundless waste. What followed was inevitable. A National Army officer declared that the food wasted at the different barracks was sufficient to support the whole civil population. And a respected Deputy declared, and could not be contradicted, that

the Free State Army in 1923 was costing just twice as much as the Belgian army, and half as much as the cost of the army of the British Empire in 1914, an army scattered over the globe.[1]

Nor was this all. In every army will be found some men of evil repute, and the Irish army had its share of such men. Under the influence of idleness and indiscipline respectable boys became demoralized, and in 1923 the country was shocked at the crimes committed by men wearing the uniform of the National army. Armed with revolvers they raided houses and robbed peaceful citizens, and did not scruple to commit murder. In Dublin soldiers went out from their barracks to rob, and when pursued, carrying off their plunder, they turned on a gallant police officer and shot him dead. In Kerry an officer brought out his men and compelled them to murder an innocent boy, the only child of his heart-broken parents; and day after day the lawless and desperate, who robbed and raided and terrorized, were aided by officers or soldiers of the National army.

The better elements in the army hung their heads in shame, and the civil population, paying heavy taxes as the price of security, asked in indignation why these things should be. While civil war went on confusion and waste might be expected. But for months there was neither war nor the semblance of war, and yet in many a barrack throughout the country the old conditions of waste and idleness continued. It was a time to root out abuses, a time to separate the sheep from the goats. The army should have been purged of idlers and drunkards. Those who wanted to go back to their farms or shops should have been allowed to go free; and officers who had neither education nor the capacity to learn should have been relegated to civil life. Nor was there any justice in having a dozen typists in an office when two would have sufficed. What Ireland wanted was a small army, trained and efficient and amenable to discipline, and many asked why could not the same effective supervision prevail in the army as in the civic guards.

[1] Mr. M'Kenna, T.D., at Kildare, 7th Nov., 1923. The army was costing £11,000,000 a year.

Feeling that the country was marching to bankruptcy, there was much discontent among the people, and had there been any regular opposition in the Dail this discontent would have found expression. Not that there was any desire to unduly embarrass the Government, still less to pass censure on men like Messrs. Cosgrave and O'Higgins and General Mulcahy. But a government is helped rather than hindered by a constitutional opposition which aims only at ending abuses; and when the voice of criticism and complaint was heard at first in the Dail, and then in the press, the Government responded by adopting a policy of national economy. Mr. Blythe, the Minister of Finance, declared that the budget must be balanced, that waste must cease, that national revenue must overtake national expenditure. To repair the damage done by the Irregulars a national loan would be necessary, and Mr. Blythe knew that the people's confidence must be won before their subscriptions could be obtained. There must then be drastic retrenchment in the public services, and not merely promises of such. A beginning was made by taking 10 per cent off the salaries of national teachers and a like amount off old age pensions, and many thousands of the army were demobilized. Concurrently with this the law was rigorously enforced. The civic guards fearlessly did their duty, and poteen-making and drunkenness and robberies were severely punished. The healthier elements in the army gave every assistance in tracking down criminals who had disgraced the soldier's uniform, and in not a few cases soldiers got the lash as well as long terms of imprisonment; and when murder was the crime the guilty soldiers were hanged. Confidence was thus gradually restored, normal conditions were coming back, the conviction grew and strengthened that the Government could govern, and the National loan of ten millions was rapidly over-subscribed.

Twelve months had brought a remarkable transformation, and when the new year dawned only a few things remained to be done to make the Free State permanently secure. There should be yet more rigid economy in Government departments. Superfluous offices should be abolished, and superfluous and incompe-

tent officers dismissed. The army should be still further reduced. Army officers should be made to understand that their duties must be done, and that influence with those in high places, coupled with idleness and negligence, must not be the only passport to promotion. Discipline should be more rigid and prospects of advancement more abundant for the capable soldier in the ranks. As in every army, the officers ought to be educated men, and if they were unwilling to enter college, or incapable of learning there, intrigue and influence ought not to secure them position, and the army must know them no more. The scandals attendant on local government ought to end; and the people must exercise more care in those selected to represent them, from the district council to the Dail. All these changes were easily attainable, and could come in 1924 if the same rate of progress was made as in 1923.

One serious outstanding difficulty which confronted the Free State from the beginning, and confronted it at the dawn of 1924, was the state of the six counties of North-east Ulster. The Ulster Orangemen did not want Home Rule, preferring the Westminster Parliament to any Irish Parliament. But, having got their own Parliament, which ensured the connection with England and kept them free from the hated Papist, they resolved to make the best of it. With something of the smug self-conceit of the Pharisee in the Temple, they thank God that they are not like the Catholics, who are so wasteful and unbusinesslike, and they would make the Belfast Parliament the model parliament of the Empire. It would right every wrong, and would have a Government at once efficient and economic. These bright hopes were not realized, and instead of economy there was extravagance everywhere. Ministers gave themselves bloated salaries; offices were given in plenty to their friends and political supporters; and an armed police force was maintained at enormous expense to enforce the unreasoning requirements of an antiquated ascendancy. Subsidies obtained from the British Parliament enabled the Belfast Government to meet its heavy liabilities. But the more thoughtful in the six counties knew that these subsidies could not be continued; and with the

losses entailed on Belfast by speculation after the Great War and a slump in shipbuilding and in the linen trade, bankruptcy would soon be reached.

The more reasonable elements knew well that hatred of the rest of Ireland would not bring prosperity or even ward off decay and ruin, and they wanted peace rather than war. And if Collins and Craig had not been thwarted in 1922 peace and unity would have come. But De Valera's renewal of the Belfast boycott and his attempt to set up a military autocracy, while breaking with England, frustrated the hopes of the moderate elements in Ulster; and when civil war broke out there was no inducement for the six counties to join the Free State, where chaos reigned and where neither life nor property was secure. The triumph of the Free State and the establishment of settled government in 1923 again brought hope of national unity and peace to moderate Ulstermen. But, meantime, the passions of the Belfast mob had been inflamed, and ministers and members of Parliament, enjoying Government patronage, and in many cases drawing fat salaries, found it to their interest to pander to the passions of the mob. The Papists were lawful game, and all might join in hunting them down. Nor can anything better describe their pitiable condition than the Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of the six counties published in October, 1923.

"It is doubtful," they say, "whether in modern times any parallel can be found for the way in which the Catholic minority in the north of Ireland is being systematically wronged under the laws of the Northern Parliament."

Proportional representation, designed to protect the minority, had been abolished; the constituencies "shamefully jerrymandered" in the interests of the Protestants; an Education Bill passed "under which Catholic schools are starved"; Catholic young men prohibited from training in the Catholic training college in Drumcondra; and instead "young men are being inveigled into courses of training in Belfast, which one cannot consider a tolerable preparation for the high office of a teacher in a Catholic school".

" As if to trample upon the feelings of those opposed to the partition of Ireland ", all holding positions under the Government or local bodies were bound to take an oath of allegiance to the Northern Government; and this was also prescribed for teachers and priests who were acting as chaplains in public institutions; " though it can hardly fail to be well known that scarcely anything else would more insidiously sap the trust and confidence which the people repose in their priests in all their troubles ".

It was, further, pointed out that there was an utter disregard for the rights of Catholics in " the attitude of leading Northern Ministers on the Boundary Question in regard to Tyrone and Fermanagh, where a large majority have voted in favour of inclusion in the Free State ".[1]

For this state of things the Belfast bigots, the British Parliament, and the Irregulars were chiefly responsible, as all these had helped to keep North and South apart. But the Free State Government and Dail Eireann were not without blame too. Even at the end of March, 1924, the promised Local Government Bill had not appeared, and incompetent and corrupt local bodies pursued their career of extravagance unchecked. No progress had been made in applying the provisions of the Land Act of the preceding year. Rates and taxes were an oppressive burden, while roads and bridges were neglected. In the civil service there were still redundant officers, and salaries paid out of all proportion to the work done. The army was far beyond the needs of the country. In the higher as well as in the lower ranks there was ignorance and indiscipline, and when demobilization came officers having influence were retained, while more capable men were in many cases sent away. Nor was there as yet any military college to train its students, as in all other countries, for military command. Gradually it leaked out that behind the scenes there were factions and intrigues among the officers, and a miserable struggle for supremacy; and at last it became necessary for the civil power to assert itself, and to call for the resignation of the Commander-in-Chief. His place was then given to General

[1] *Catholic Directory*, 1924.

O'Duffy, who had so successfully trained and commanded the civic guard, and who would be sure to put down in the army any attempt at mutiny, and, still more, any thought to establish a military autocracy.

On the question of national unity it would be useless to appeal to the Belfast mob; and even to the moderate business men in the six counties a spendthrift Government and a mutinous army could make no appeal. Nor could the Boundary Commission bring permanent peace to a distracted Ulster and a divided Ireland. It would alleviate but could not cure existing ills. A cure, however, can be found, and can be found by Irishmen themselves Let the Free State ensure efficiency and economy in its Government; let its army be reduced to proper limits, and be no longer a menace to the civil power; let the vain striving for a Republic cease, and let there be a cordial acceptance of the status gained and then the statesmen of Dublin and Belfast can meet in friendship and a bridge can be built across the Boyne.

If no such meeting as this has been hitherto held, and no such bridge built, the fault lies with the British Parliament. Not content with placing large areas in the Six Counties in unwilling subjection to the Belfast Parliament, it has continued to vote large sums to the Belfast Government for the maintenance of an armed police force of 45,000 men. Recruited chiefly from the Orange Lodges these men willingly ensure the outlawry of Catholics, which has received statutory sanction from the exclusively Protestant Parliament of Belfast; and while British statesmen continue to repeat that there must be no coercion of " Ulster " they tolerate and sustain the coercion of constituencies and even of counties within its limits. It is not therefore the statesmen of Belfast but the statesmen of Westminster who are most to blame, if, so far, the Boyne has not been bridged.

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